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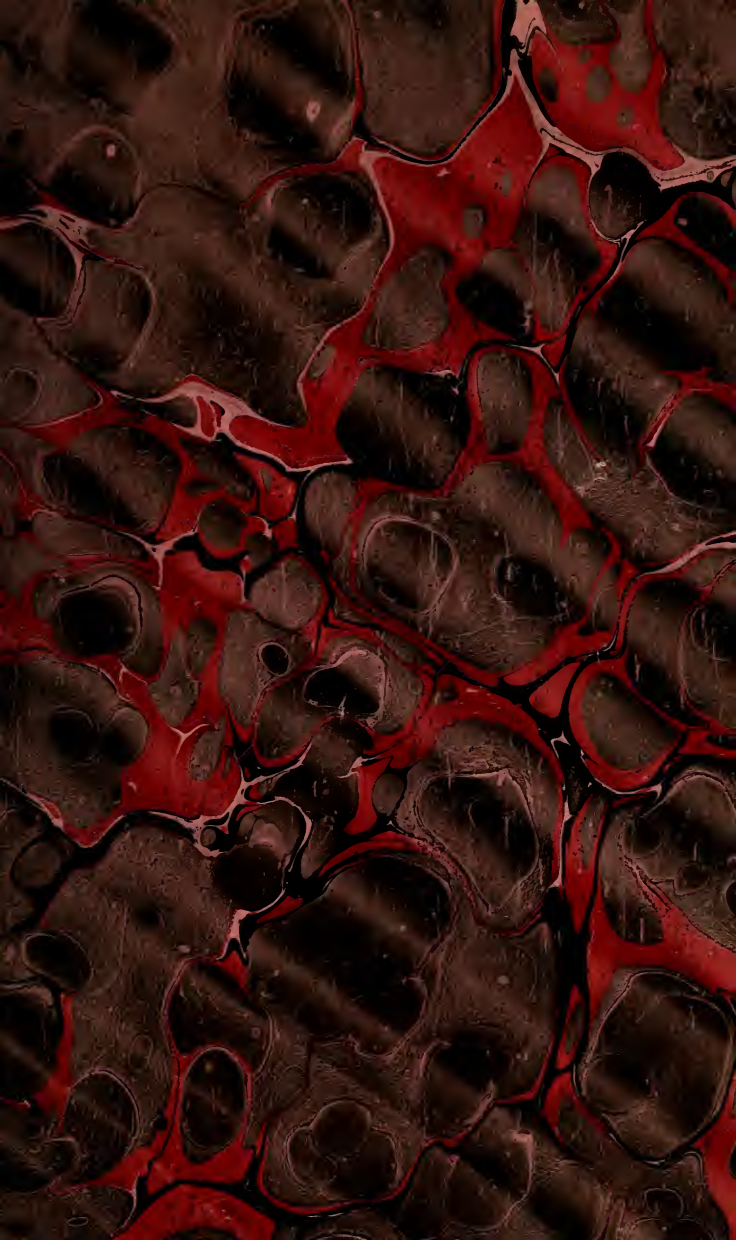

MIRROR OF THE SOUL,

OR

SPIRITUAL THINGS DISCERNED.

BY A

Christian Lady.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

REV. D. HOLMES, A. M.,

AUTHOR OF "PURE GOLD," "WESLEY OFFERING," ETC., ETC.

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INTRODUCTION.

The hand which wrote the following pages, is now motionless in death. The sensitive and sympathizing heart which traced each line, and responded to the pious and truthful sentiments recorded, is no longer susceptible of the emotions awakened by earthly scenes. It has found a sphere of existence and state of society, more congenial to its refined sensibilites and holy aspirations; and responds to the exalted employments and themes of the heavenly state.

The work which this paper is intended to introduce to the public, was written during the interim between 1843 and 1850. The author, (an intelligent, highly respected, and deeply pious female, late a resident of Cortland Co., N. Y.) has been induced by that modesty and humility which must ever be approved and admired as elements of the Christian character, to withhold her name from the

public. But though her name does not appear in the title page, yet the public are secure from imposition, in the fact that she was personally known to a large circle of friends, ministers and private Christians, by whom her character was highly appreciated, and whose judgement is, that the work herein refered to, should be given to the world in a permanent form.

It is possible, had the writer lived to supervise the publication of this book herself, it might have appeared in a somewhat different character; but she had only time to finish the manuscript in its present form, and commit it to the care of her husband, with instruction to publish or withhold as his judgment might dictate, when the messenger of death, of whose approach she had been for some time aware, made his appearance, and terminated her life and labors together. A title somewhat different from that designated by the author, has been affixed to the book, but otherwise, the editor has not interfered with the arrangement of subjects, or the relative position of chapters.

As to the contents of this book, it is a record of personal experience and doctrinal views, given, not dogmatically, controversially, or ostentatiously,

but in a practical form, and in the spirit of true Christian meekness and humility. Deep religious experience and practical godliness, are the points mainly aimed at by the writer, and the doctrinal views presented are only considered important as they stand related to that which is vital in righteousness and true holiness.

The intelligent reader will perceive that this work lacks unity. It is apparent that the author did not set out with the design of elaborating, establishing, or enforcing, any *one* fact or doctrine in philosophy or religion. There is no attempt to present a systematic view of divinity, or to show how the leading doctrines of the gospel harmonize with each other. The chapters are not so many parts of one and the same discourse, mutually connected, and forming one perfect whole. They sustain no other relation to each other than that which one truth bears to another, and possess no other harmony than pervades the entire domain of Christian verities. But we are confident the book will not be less acceptable and useful on this account. Those who have a heart to enter into the deep things of spiritual religion—who appreciate forcible views of Christian duty, and love

truth for the truth's sake, will find it congenial to their religious taste and feelings, and a means of increasing their relish for divine things; while the lukewarm and wordly minded will find their spirit rebuked with so much severity and kindness, that they can hardly fail to be convicted of delinquency, and roused to action.

The style of this book is most excellent. There is no effort at the ornate, and yet it is neither dry nor dull. Though extremely simple, it is yet interesting, forcible, and soul-stirring. The words are well chosen, and the sentences, though not loaded with verbiage, are full and well sustained.

The Scripture allusions are most happy, and the quotations from the Bible remarkably well adapted to illustrate, confirm, and enrich the subject set forth and discussed.

The writer makes no high literary pretensions. Her views of Christian humility would have prevented this in any case. But that which is much more valuable than mere educational polish will be apparent to every attentive reader, viz:—a strong mind, a correct judgment, a clear perception, a critical acquaintance with the diseases of the heart, and deep experience in the things of God. Moreover,

the literary qualifications of the writer will appear to all competent to judge, to be amply sufficient for the work to which she devoted the last years of her life.

It is possible, and even probable, that the author has presented and advocated views in some cases, which will not meet the concurrence of all who may read them. But this is not uncommon, and should not excite suspicion or alarm. The right to read the Scriptures, each for ourself, and form our own opinion of what is read, being responsible only to God for the rectitude of our intentions, is fundamental in Protestantism. And it is equally the right and privilege of all, to publish their understanding of the meaning of holy Scripture, and of the doctrines of the gospel.

There are, indeed, certain great principles of Bible truth which must ever be considered fundamental, and no material deviation from these can be viewed with indifference, or tolerated for a moment by those who cherish due respect for the Word of God. There are also some secondary principles, which sustain so intimate a relation to what is fundamental in doctrine,

and vital in experience and practice, that to entertain or advocate anything tending to subvert their practical effect, is not only unsafe, but often positively pernicious.

But we apprehend that no examples of this kind will be found in the following chapters. In no case has the writer departed from the essential land-marks of Christianity. Whenever she refers to first principles, her evangelism is clear and decided. The points in which she may appear singular, and even to have adopted erroneous views, are chiefly of a practical character.

Without doubt the author's views of what is embraced in confessing Christ, may seem to some, to be too rigid. Lax notions on this point have obtained. There are not a few who suppose a general confession of Christ by baptism, or public profession and formal connection with the Church, is sufficient for all the purposes of personal religion and future salvation. That to descend to particulars, especially in acknowledging the mercy and grace of Christ as displayed in our personal, spiritual attainments, is not only not necessary, but ostenta-

tious, and therefore improper. Such a view of duty and obligation to Christ will find no countenance or sympathy in this book. Nor should it; such an easy Christianity merits the severest rebuke.

Separation from the world, is also a subject on which much is said in this work; and many severe things are recorded against the worldly and time-serving spirit and practice of such ministers and Churches as seek to strengthen and aggrandize their position by unholy alliances, and by catering to the viscious taste of a corrupt state of society. These censures are bestowed with an honest purpose, and hearty good-will which must meet the approbation of every spiritually minded Christian. And they are in many cases richly merited. It cannot have escaped the observation of the discerning, that a popular sort of religion has obtained in some branches of the Church. The effort seems to be to make religion fashionable—to see how much conformity to the world can be maintained without a positive forfeiture of the Christian character. This is a state of things greatly to be deprecated, and it must, in some way, be reme-

died, before any very signal triumphs can be gained for true religion. The world will never be converted until the Church learns more perfectly where her true strength lies, and maintains an independent and upright position—until she comes up fully "out of the wilderness, leaning on the arm of her beloved." In her discussion and illustration of this point, the writer is very forcible and convincing. In one respect, however, we think she has carried her doctrine of separation from the world too far, viz: in condemning the acceptance of pecuniary assistance, in aid of Church enterprises, from those who are not of the household of faith. Our Lord says: "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." There are several respects in which Christians have a necessary connection with the world. Many of the enterprises of the Church partake of a business character, and must be conducted on business principles. The silver and gold of this world belong to God, whether in the hands of saints or sinners; and if the Church can obtain control of it to advance the kingdom of Christ, without succumbing to the

spirit of the world, or sacrificing her integrity or doctrinal and practical purity and independency, it is not only right, but commendable. It gives her a power of usefulness which she could not otherwise have. Christ did not hesitate to partake the hospitality of sinners when it afforded him the opportunity of doing good, and did not compromise his character.

Though there are several other topics embraced in this work on which we might dwell, yet we are disinclined to extend this introduction further. Perhaps we have already detained the reader from the perusal of the book too long. We close by expressing an earnest hope that this unpretending volume may find its way into thousands of families, and be read with an interest and profit equal to its pious design and intrinsic value.

D. HOLMES.

Auburn, June 22, 1852.

PREFACE.

THE good that is done in the earth the Lord doeth it: and to accomplish his pleasure and perfect every good work, he needeth not the help of any creature. He can do all things with or without human instrumentality; but all creatures belong to him, and he will employ whomsoever he will, in doing whatsoever he will. It becometh not any creature to say he will do this or that, because "all power belongeth to God" who works with the *will and* with the *doings* of his creatures, whatever result seems good to him; and no creature can suspend the exercise of his power, or prevent, or bring to pass, any thing which the Creator determines shall or shall not be done.

The Lord is just and good, and his mercy endureth forever. It is not his good pleasure that any should perish, but rather that all should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. Hence salvation is provided for them that were lost, so that "whosever will may" and does "come and take the water of life freely." Christ came into the world to save sinners, and by and through him, many are saved. "Without him we can do nothing" but in and with him we can do all things which the spirit of truth works in us to will and to do. The counsel and work of the spirit must stand forever; but the counsel and doings of men must perish. If the simple instrument employed in writing

this book has learned of Jesus, and been led by his spirit to make this confession of his truth; then however foolish and imperfect the work may appear in the sight of men, it is the Lord's doing, and will surely accomplish his purpose concerning it. But if human wisdom, or any earthly or selfish motives have originated and induced the publication of the things herein written, this book must perish with the reading, and the author be reproved and made ashamed when her folly and presumption are made manifest.

But herein I have hope in God, and believe his spirit and grace have led me to apprehend and know some things that are freely given to us of God, which things are perhaps not generally received or even published in the world; and having this hope and this confidence, I cast myself upon his mercy, and venture to make this public confession of what appears to me to be truth as it is in Jesus. If I am not deceived, my faith in God and repentance toward our Lord Jesus Christ are sincere and effectual; being the fruit of the operation of the spirit of truth working in me to believe and love the things of God; and I believe also through the operation of the same spirit, I am taught and required to make this confession of Christ before men.

The disciples of Jesus are living members of one body; being mutually joined together, mutually united to Christ, their living head, and mutually dependent upon each other; so that "if one member suffer all the members suffer with it," or one member be honored or enlightened, all the members rejoice with it. Christ is the Head and Life of every particular member, from "whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

The eye cannot say to the hand I have no need of thee, because unto every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, for the perfecting of the saints, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

The "Communion of Saints," is founded upon the fact that Christianity is a life communicated to, and dwelling in the members of Christ; from whence it follows that Christians are not isolated individuals, separate and distinct from each other; but a real and living *unity*—one in spirit, one in life, and one in the knowledge and love of God. The fellowship of the Spirit is not the work of men. The Lord Jesus Christ is the author and finisher of the union and communion of them that are baptized into one spirit, and that have fellowship with the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. It is not therefore the work of men to originate the idea, or produce the true outward appearance of Christian union. Their *first* and great work is to learn and know the existence of this fact; to recognize its manifestations, and discern the spirit and character of its subjects. And, *secondly*, their great work is to turn away from every opposing influence, and remove the obstacles that hinder or prevent its progress and perfection.

Faith is the element or medium in and through which the soul receives the inspirations of a new life—a life which proceeds from God, and which lives in him, and in every one that is born of the Spirit. Without faith it is impossible to be like Christ, or to be united to his members; and also impossible to have communion with Saints.

According to the experience and doctrines acknowledged in this book, professing Christians generally do not accept and enjoy the heavenly and

good things prepared for them; and according to the views herein presented, they have fallen away, and do not come up to their sacred obligations, and to the exalted privileges which the children of God are called and required to attain and enjoy. A vast multitude assume the name of Christ, and the great number of sects and communities denominated the Christian Church, may doubtless be reckoned the most honorable and powerful people in the world. But the present character and works of the visible Church, do not seem to be in accordance with the works and character of Christ: neither do the great majority composing these various distinct fraternities, prove to the world or to each other, that "God now accepteth their works."

Like ancient Israel, the visible Church is "joined in affinity with the people of these lands," and does not keep herself unspotted from the world. Her Maker is her husband; but she has left her first love, and is now united in fellowship and affection with the friends of the world, even with those who are the enemies of God; and for this cause her divine character, glory, and strength, have departed from her.

If the simple confession herein made to the children of God, be a confession of Christ, and of the truths learned of him, they are great truths. They are confessed, and they belong only to those who are chosen out of the world—who love God, and love not earthly things; because if they be of Christ, these alone can receive and profit by them. They are not given or confessed to those who know not God—that love the world, and the things of the world; because these cannot apprehend or appreciate them: though doubtless many of these will be glad and rejoice in this confession, because herein Zion is reproved. But the triumphing of the wicked is short. They triumph because they discern not

their own state, and because they love to hear and know that Christ is crucified in the house of his friends. They cannot weep and mourn over the desolations of Zion, because they do not sincerely love and desire her prosperity. They have no fellowship with the sufferings of those who are deeply humbled and deeply afflicted because Zion languishes, and hence they have no part nor lot in this matter.

The mind and spirit of Christ in his members, can discern and know whether these things be of God, or whether they be of men; and they cannot well be deceived or mistaken in relation to this matter. The conclusions and doctrines herein acknowledged and confessed, are simple and apparent; they are the subjects of every day's experience and observation; and the capacity of the child or the wayfaring man, that is taught of God, can easily apprehend them; and by the sure Word, and the testimony of his own experience, easily prove or disprove them. They are comprehended in the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, and if Christians do not have communion and fellowship with the same Spirit and the same faith, then the writer has taken the spirit of error for the spirit of truth, and a delusion for that baptism wherewith we are all baptized into one spirit in Christ.

If the records of Christian experience were always a perfect expression of the good work of grace wrought in the heart, these confessions would be excellent and precious indeed. But the earthen vessel containing these heavenly and precious "gifts," is unfit and unable to hold and dispense them, separate and free from the imperfections of the instrument employed in receiving and dispensing them. The unclean hand has stained every unsullied thing it has handled, and the earthly affections of the human heart, have mingled themselves more or less with the inspirations of the spirit of truth. Hence

the testimony of the disciples of Christ is liable to be defective and imperfect, according to the weakness and imperfection of the human understanding. And herein there is no help for us but in God, who gives the Holy Spirit to all them that obey him; and these being led and taught by his Spirit, are able to "separate the precious from the vile," and to "gather the good into their own vessels, and cast the bad away."

And now, Holy Father, thou knowest all things, and thou knowest whether this imperfect offering is in sincerity and truth, laid upon the altar that sanctifies the gift. Thou knowest whether for Christ's sake thou wilt accept the sacrifice, and glorify thyself therewith, and employ it in doing good to thy children. If it be not so; how worthless, how perfectly vain and foolish, this effort of the creature must prove to be. Be merciful to me a sinner, O Lord; and for Christ's sake, in this thing, leave me not to do any thing without thy counsel and thy blessing. Holy Father, I know thou knowest all things, and all power is with thee; and even now, though I have purposed in my heart to make this confession public, thou canst turn me from this purpose, or by any means thou canst prevent it. And if the things herein written, and their confession to thy children, be not in accordance with thy holy will and Word, then do thou for Christ's sake banish them quickly from thy presence, and from the world. And otherwise, Holy Father, if thou wilt accept and sanctify this unworthy offering, then do thou prepare the way, and over-rule the agencies that may be employed in publishing and conveying it to those to whom it is sent; so that all shall be done according to thy will, and the only and final result be the edification of thy children, and the glory of thy great Name. THE AUTHOR.

Cortlandville, April, 1851.

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CHAPTER I.

Experience and hope of Salvation—Conviction—Experience and Faith—Experience and Victory—Faith and Salvation—Reflections.

EXPERIENCE AND HOPE OF SALVATION.

PRAISE the Lord, O, my soul; it is not with me now as in months and years past. Jesus has taught me to understand and obey the plain, simple word, "Believe," and now "I live by faith on the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." These many years I have been seeking to find the narrow way of holiness and peace, but it seemed to be far off. I knew not that it was near at hand, and therefore have labored and suffered much, and gone far away to find and obtain that which was always present with me. The *Way*, the *Truth* and the *Life* are revealed and made manifest in the Word of God, but I would not believe, therefore could not learn the *Way*.

The wisdom and opinions of men have had dominion over me, and therefore the word of God, and the spirit of Truth have not been my wisdom and salvation. Because of unbelief I could not find peace or rest, and hence have been troubled about many things, and the anguish of spirit and fear, and burden of desire that have attended me from childhood are known only to Him who seeth in secret.

A few weeks since I began to inquire of the Lord, and by fasting and prayer to seek diligently, in order to obtain the forgiveness of sin, and grace to love the Lord with my whole heart. I soon began to believe his word, (though indeed from my youth I had always supposed I believed it;) and I found that which I sought after, in believing. As I began to believe I began to make confession by words and by works, of the truths I believed, and in a small measure I now experience the fulfillment of what our Lord said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are *spirit*, and they are *life*." I know, indeed, t hey are spirit and life to them that believe and live by them. My views of things are not as they were; the affections of the heart are changed, and I believe this change has been effected by the *life* and *spirit* of the Word of God. But this change is not perfected, and my faith is not yet finished, and perhaps I cannot know the perfection of this change or the finishing of my faith until I am led into all truth, and "live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Sometimes of late I have almost believed the warfare was accomplished, and sin had no more dominion over me; but I find both my faith and works are very imperfect, and learn also that a great change must yet be wrought before I can run with patience the race set before me. My heart is fixed: I will believe and trust in the Lord. To create anew in knowledge and true holiness, is his work, and if I "do not frustrate his grace" he will finish and perfect that which he has begun. He gives me to learn my own present, simple duties, but does not give me to understand the way that he takes. I am the clay in the hand of the Potter, and a few days since when striving to lie passive there, these words seemed to be sweetly and impressively spoken to my heart, "what I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

Since I began to believe and receive some things that are given to us of God in his Word, I have greatly desired to learn more truth, and to experience that work of grace that will bring every thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ. I may and must come where grace will enable me to say, "I love not the world nor the things of the world;" my treasure and conversation are in heaven, and I have no more interest or pleasure in earthly things, only as I receive and enjoy God in them. Come Lord Jesus quickly, and reign within, for

> "'Tis worse than death my God to love,
> And not my God alone."

CONVICTION.

Various changes and a pleasant journey have occupied my attention some weeks past, but my mind has not been kept "in perfect peace." I have felt the strivings of nature against grace, and have known the anguish the soul endures in contending against the reasonings of an evil heart of unbelief. The present effects of any departure from the holy Word of God, are truly fearful and distressing; and yet how easy and natural for me to turn away from his commandments.

I have felt the bitter reproofs of a wounded conscience; a conscience wounded in "halting between two opinions;" and by painful experience have learned that henceforth I must watch, and avoid the danger of being in a state of indecision or doubt, whether to obey God or man. The influence of friends or friendship; the opinions or pleasures of the world, must not prevent me from doing every thing with the simple intention to please God. This is, indeed, a narrow way, the way of daily self-denial; and in order to walk therein I must renounce every lust of the flesh, the pride of life, and make myself "of no reputation." I must forsake all if I will follow Christ; yet I desire to follow him, and be free in his service, and know no other interest or joy but in doing his will.

EXPERIENCE AND FAITH.

Three months past have been days of prayer

and praise; the most valuable and interesting portion of my life. Since I learned to live by faith, my darkest hours are brighter than the brightest were before. Why have I lived so long ignorant of the way of salvation? I have read many good books in order to learn the way—have followed the counsel and example of Christian friends in using the means of grace, and many years have been a professor of religion. And now, after these many years of faithless, fruitless efforts to be a Christian, I have done what I might and should have done, the first day I read the Word of God, and learned that I was a sinner. I have ventured to believe and confess the truth that is able to sanctify and save the soul; and now my "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Why have I suffered so many things? Why have I with weeping and fervent desire, so many times "asked amiss?" And why did I not obey this plain, simple requisition of the Gospel, years ago? Because I loved the world, and would consume many things upon my lusts, and would not deny myself *daily*, and take up the cross and follow Jesus in *this way*. Therefore, I could not receive and obey this word, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." But when my darkness and unbelief testified against me, and my doubts and fears were a burden too intolerable to bear, I came to the deliberate conclusion to forsake *all*, and

seek the Lord with my whole heart. I found him in believing his words, and found also that peace the world knew not of. Now I hear "the Spirit and the Bride say come;" and I know that he that is athirst may come, and whosoever will may take the water of life freely. The Lord has spoken and the earth hath heard, and whosoever will does come and receive the remission of sin, and grace to work out their salvation.

EXPERIENCE AND VICTORY.

It is now seven months since I believed "Jesus hath loved me, and given himself for me;" and believed also, "if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This simple faith enables me to "reckon myself dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." And this simple faith also confers the exalted privilege of being united with his members, with whom I can boldly say, "salvation is of grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God."

We have no hope but in Christ, and can only live in the atonement; and here we may ask in his name, and receive for his sake. His infinite wisdom, power and love, are engaged in our behalf. The heavenly host are favorably disposed toward us. They look with interest upon the purchase of a Saviour's blood, and are now rejoicing over those

who are coming out from the world, and being prepared to mingle in their own blessed society. All these are for us; who then can prevail against us? Surely they be more and greater that desire and rejoice in our salvation, than all that can oppose or wish us evil. It is safe to be on the "Lord's side," and commit our whole interest, temporal and eternal, into *his* hands, who reigns over all in heaven and on earth.

FAITH AND SALVATION.

Without faith it is impossible to please God—the faith that works by love and purifies the heart. Humility, or joy, or obedience, are not faith; but are the necessary effect or fruit of faith in the soul. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. He that cometh to God must believe He is present to hear, and that He is our rewarder, while we diligently seek Him. We must believe His words are true, and that it is done unto us according to His word. His commands and promises are words spoken to us, and inasmuch as we believe and obey them, they are fulfilled in us. The promises comprehend all spiritual and temporal blessings which lost, helpless sinners need. They include the forgiveness of sin, the gift of the holy spirit, a pure heart, and the abiding presence of Jesus. What God has given in his promises, we are permitted, yea, required to receive, even as we are permitted and required to obey his commands. If we will believe his words

and forsake our sins, he is ever ready and willing to take away our sin, and to work in us the fulfillment of every command and every promise. All things are possible to him that believeth.

We receive, not because we believe, nor because we have desired, or done any good; but we receive because Jesus lives to intercede for us. He is able and worthy to procure, and give whatsoever he will, and he will give unto us according to our faith. We receive not before, nor after, but when we believe; though at the time our senses may not discern the things we have received; or they may be in reserve for us in the future, but they are ours. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and faith apprehends and receives them.

He that is poor and guilty and helpless, may ask now and receive, because the promise belongs to him, if he will by faith receive it. But he that is rich and honorable and righteous in his own eyes, cannot ask and receive, because he hath already; he is full, therefore he must go away empty.

Blessed are they who believe the words of eternal life, and without drawing back go on from one word or truth to another, until they are led into all truth, and live by every word of God. They fear not what man can say or do unto them, because the sword of the spirit is their defence, and faith is their support. They are not like those who once believed and received the forgiveness of sin, and then did not press onward, until they believed and expe-

rienced this greater truth, "The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all unrighteousness." Many who once believed have fallen away, because they did not continue to *live* by faith, and increase in the knowledge of the truth until Christ made them free. For this cause many who were once enlightened, have reason to be greatly alarmed, lest that which he hath given should be taken away and given to him who improveth what he hath. And for this cause all should fear, and by watchfulness and prayer keep themselves in the love of God, lest "the light that is in us become darkness." It were better never to have known the way of life, than, after we have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto us.

He that believeth shall be saved; that is, he that believes and lives by every word of God. Believing one day, or believing one truth, is not salvation; but living by faith, until every command and every promise necessary to our salvation, be fulfilled in us. He that believeth or endureth to the end, the same shall be saved. When faith has overcome and gained the victory, we *are* saved. The great and exceeding "precious promises whereby we are made partakers of the divine nature," are then fulfilled in us; and herein is salvation and eternal life.

REFLECTIONS.

A change of place, or changes in outward circumstances, are not necessary to make us contented and

happy. God is every where, and we need only that inward change that prepares the heart to apprehend and enjoy him. Let the soul be united by faith and love to God, and the mind not only receives with cheerful submission whatever comes to pass, but is instructed and profited by whatever Providence appoints or permits to be the present order and state of things. "Great peace have they who love thy law, and nothing shall offend them:" and "he that believeth shall not make haste."

Nothing can procure inward peace but that state of mind which refers all things to God, and enjoys him in all things; and nothing can prevent or destroy our peace, but that disposition of soul which loves to be far from God and unreconciled to him. O, Lord, thou art very near, even round about and in our midst; and thou doest all things well, but we do not love all thy ways, nor all thy requirements. We love and desire many things which thy Word and thy Providence do not permit us to obtain or enjoy; and hence we are not satisfied with our present condition, but are seeking after some change in our outward state, wherein we vainly suppose we can be in peace. But without God we can enjoy nothing; and when we believe this truth and learn to seek and enjoy him as the only and Supreme Good, we are no more hindered by outward things, because we learn that our peace and best interests are promoted by whatever comes to pass. It is good for the creature to know "the Lord reigns,"

and submit himself to his government without reserve. And it is most dangerous and absurd for any creature to be displeased with the order of Providence, or to strive to make outward things subject to *his* order, or to bring any thing into subjection to himself but his own rebellious spirit.

CHAPTER II.

The Word of God, Spirit and Life—Experience and Confession—Conviction of Sin—Trial and Confession—Trial and Warfare.

THE WORD OF GOD, SPIRIT AND LIFE.

THE words of inspiration are not like the words of men. They express what man never spake, and convey what man never conceived. Our Lord said, "the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life, and if my words abide in you then are ye my disciples indeed." "If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come and make our abode with him." Blessed, indeed, are they who are made able and worthy to keep the words of eternal life.

The words of men convey ideas or thoughts to those whose thoughts are like their own; but the words of inspiration, or the words of men "who

spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," are words that convey the ideas or thoughts of Him whose ways are as high above us as the heavens are high above the earth. God is in his word; hence, the Psalmist said, "thy word hath quickened me," and "thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path;" and the Prophet, "his word was in my heart, a burning fire shut up in my bones;" and the Apostle, also, "the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two edged sword, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

"We have heard, and have looked upon, and our hands have handled the word of life," but inasmuch as we have not believed and loved the truth, we have not received and known its spirit and power. He that is of God, heareth God's words, but he that is of the world, and loves and enjoys earthly things, his word can have no place in him. Our Lord said, "he that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken the same shall judge him in the last day." It is written, "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Every word given by inspiration is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness; and not by one or many, but by *every* word shall man live. There is nothing in the Word of God to be refused, nothing in his holy commandments to be rejected or lightly esteemed. Whoever is willing to break one of the least command-

ments, cannot in spirit and truth keep one of them ; and though he may desire and intend to keep the whole law, (excepting what may seem to be some small and almost harmless deviations,) yet if he will offend in one point, he is guilty of all. He that will keep back any part of the price, or hesitate to devote himself unreservedly to God, is doing that, which, without repentance and reformation, will exclude him from heaven.

Blessed Jesus, thou dost give thy disciples the words of eternal life. and by these they are led into all truth, and all obedience. Thou canst speak, and thy words are written in our hearts, and we love them, and not one of thy commands are grievous. Do thou speak to our souls, and all other teachers may be silent, for thou alone canst speak the words that are spirit and life, and thou alone canst speak the power in the word to obey it. Thou canst speak and thy word shall accomplish the thing whereunto it is sent. Speak, Lord, and thy servants shall hear and live by every word thou hast spoken.

EXPERIENCE AND CONFESSION.

It is now one year since I began to believe and confess that Jesus hath power on earth to forgive sin, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness. Thus far the Lord hath led me on, and his grace enables me to say this day, my prospects are brighter, and my soul enjoys more of his love than when I first

believed. One year has proved his grace sufficient, and proved also that he that believeth on him, shall not be confounded. Jesus is all I need, and to know and love him more, is all I wish to learn. His name is ever new and precious, and his goodness manifested the past year cannot be told. What can his worthless creature render to him for all his benefits. I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of all his people." How good and profitable to serve him in faithfulness and truth all the days of my life; and how reasonable and necessary that I should forsake *all* in order to follow Jesus, and be his disciple. If I will do this, I must in humility and meekness bear the cross, deny myself daily, and no more love nor seek honor that comes from men. I must renounce the desire and prospect of being or doing any thing of importance in the world, and must count myself, and be willing to be counted of others, as the least of all.

The poor, the ignorant and wicked, are my equals, and with and among these I can best serve my master. My companions may be the humble, the afflicted, and those who are lightly esteemed; and if I may have a measure of their confidence and sympathy, I shall have reason to acknowledge myself more honored of God and man than I deserve. I must not value the friendship or esteem of the learned or rich, because their influence is adapted to hold me

in bondage; and until I utterly renounce and cease to love these things, I cannot be free indeed. O, that I could be willing to be humbled, and come down to that low estate where pride, in no form whatever, could live in me. When our Lord came into the world "he made himself of no reputation," but took on him the form of a servant, and spent his life in doing good to the unthankful and the evil. It is for me to follow Jesus in his humiliations and sufferings, and in this respect the disciple should not desire to be above his Lord. It is enough if the servant may be as his Master.

CONVICTION OF SIN.

A faithful servant and minister of Christ has been with us a few days. His message I doubt not will prove a savor of life or of death unto me. I have learned of him the way of salvation more perfectly, and have learned, also, how foolish I am, and ignorant, and how unworthy to bear the name of Christ. I must arise, and with renewed zeal and self-denial, strive to work out my salvation. If I will make my calling and election sure, the whole mind must be renewed, and the heart purified from earthly affections, and from all sinful desires and lusts of the flesh. A brighter light shines on the road that leads to heaven, and while I have this light I must believe, and walk in it, else this light will become my darkness, and bring me into greater condemnation.

I learn that my duties and obligations are changed

when it is given me to know more of "the truth," and when the light makes manifest and reproves the errors that were concealed in darkness, there must be a corresponding change in the life and character. The errors and mistakes that are the necessary effect of blindness of mind, are no more "sins of ignorance," or errors of the judgment, after the mind has been enlightened in the knowledge of that truth that makes these errors manifest. But they are then presumptuous sins, and peculiarly aggravated in the sight of God. Hence, I can no more live and act as in days and years past. I am brought into another place, and whether I will conform to the change or not, the light will change my character and responsibilities, and compel me to live differently from what I have done, or else my character in the sight of God, will be more dark and perverse than before, and I shall forfeit and lose more than I have before lost.

My present position is truly interesting and fearful, because the light now shines and I am required to believe and walk in it. How great my danger and loss if I fail to believe and obey the truth I have learned of Jesus through one of his faithful servants. And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee, and is not this an accepted time, and *now* the day of salvation? Thou hast purchased for the chief of sinners, and for me, salvation to the uttermost, and as thou dost freely give, so I may freely receive. "Thy grace is sufficient." The idols thou wilt ut-

terly abolish, and henceforth lead thy erring creature in the way of self-denial, until I am crucified with Christ—being dead to the world and alive unto God.

TRIAL AND CONFESSION.

These are days of trial. My transgressions press heavily upon me. I feel the workings of an evil heart of unbelief—deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, and can hardly endure this knowledge of my state. Why am I so slow and unwilling to give up my interest in the things of the world, and take Christ for my only portion? He is my only Lord and Master, whom I desire to love and serve with my whole heart. Why, then, should I fear the displeasure of those who do not love and serve him? And why should I wish to keep the friendship of my Lord's enemies, or follow their customs, or be led by their opinions? I "cannot serve God and mammon;" and the "friendship of the world is enmity with God." There must, therefore be an entire, unreserved surrender—a forsaking and turning away from the love of the world, and from earthly things, or I cannot follow Christ and be his disciple. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." If the heart was right, I should be as willing to receive the frowns as favors of the world, and should choose poverty rather than riches; because in the Word of God, the estate of poverty is commended, and the rich reproved.

And if all was right within, I should reckon it more blessed to give than to receive, and choose rather to loose and suffer than to gain and enjoy.

The life and spirit of Christ, are the only standard of excellence and perfection; and our wisdom and blessedness consist in following his example, and being as he was in the world. But in striving to follow Jesus, I fail in every point; with me all is failure; and yet I dare to hope and venture to believe, "he will guide me by his counsel and afterward receive me to glory." His blessed words are ever with me, "If any man will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me, and where I am, there also shall my servant be." My own wisdom, the counsel and opinions of men, must not guide nor govern me; they always lead away from the cross. The way of self-denial, and the highway of holiness are "cast up" before me, and being encouraged by many exceeding precious promises, I will strive diligently and suffer much in order to walk therein.

TRIAL AND WARFARE.

It seems that my heavenly Father will permit me to have nothing pleasant or desirable to enjoy or trust in, but his grace and truth. My circumstances are indeed favorable and prosperous in the world, and were it now given me to choose my place and connections in life, I would not make any change. The things I have loved and desired, of an

earthly nature, are given me to enjoy, and yet these advantages are the occasion of my greatest trials and strongest temptations.

> "Why are all my hopes beguiled?
> Why are all my pleasures spoiled?
> Why does agony and woe,
> From my choicest comforts flow?"

An evil heart of unbelief, and affections set on earthly things, are no doubt the real cause of all my afflictions. I am often careful and troubled about many things which I ought to forsake and forget; and am reproved and condemned because my faith does not gain the victory over the world. The natural mind is of the earth, earthy, and cannot relish heavenly things; hence, self must be crucified and die, in order that Christ may live and reign in the heart. The crucifixion of the life of nature, implies suffering more or less severe, according to the degree of resistance existing in the soul against the operations of the spirit of truth. Therefore my present state is both painful and dangerous, because the carnal mind still lives, and the whole soul and body are not presented a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is my reasonable service. I believe it is my privilege and duty to attain that state wherein I shall be as willing to be censured and reproved, as to be esteemed and commended; and as ready to serve and labor for the unthankful and the evil, as I am that others should serve me, one of the most unworthy and ungrateful. This was the spirit

and example of Christ; and inasmuch as this is not my state, I am convicted and desire to repent and forsake my sins; and am willing to be afflicted until I learn obedience from suffering. I desire not, nor ask, to become great or happy, but I desire and pray to be delivered from sin, and made humble and holy in heart.

CHAPTER III.

What it is to confess Christ—Communion with Nature's Works, and the Word of God better than Intercourse with the World—Necessity of abiding in Christ—Brevity of Human Life—Religious Experience.

WHAT IT IS TO CONFESS CHRIST.

"WHOSOEVER shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father in heaven."

Truly it becometh us to consider, and understand what it is to confess Christ, and to learn, also, wherein we have denied him, lest when we appear before him and say, "Lord, in thy name we have done many wonderful works," he shall answer and say, "depart from me ye workers of iniquity." It is indeed possible with our lips to confess Christ, and in our works deny him; and with fear and shame I must acknowledge that my words and actions have

often denied the blessed Jesus, even since I professed to know and follow him. I have ignorantly believed I was making a good confession, when my works and influence were saying, "I know not the man." If a form of godliness, or an acknowledgement of the truth, were always a confession of Christ, we might say, *broad* is the way that leadeth unto life, and MANY there be that find it; for indeed a form of godliness is common among men, and the multitude profess faith in Christ; and if this alone were confession of Jesus, we might say Christendom is gone after him.

But whoever will confess Christ before men, so as to be acknowledged before the Father, must confess him in a spiritual and holy life. No one can truly confess Christ, unless the mind and spirit of Christ live in him. A man cannot communicate what he has not; and in order to confess Christ, we must have Christ to confess. The conversation and conduct must be a real and visible expression of grace and truth within. The operations or fruits of the spirit are manifested outwardly, and these are a confession of Christ. Words and professions that are not the effect or fruit of the spirit, cannot confess Christ, because Christ is not in them. The words and professions of men may express much humility and love; but if the spirit of their character and actions, is not the spirit of meekness and charity, they are really denying Christ, and their words and professions only confess they are deceiving themselves

or being deceived. Whatever is opposed to the fruits of the spirit, or whatever is contrary to love, humility and faith, denies Christ and acknowledges Belial. Our Lord said, "he that is not for me is against me," and this must be the position of every one, who has not received the record which God hath given of his Son, and is not in spirit and truth partaker of the "heavenly gift," and forsaking all for Christ's sake.

In our intercourse with men, there are many ways wherein we may deny our Lord. We may deny him in our *words* by speaking contrary to truth, or by speaking evil of others, or by foolish talking or jesting, or by words that are idle or unkind; and herein, by our words, we confess Christ is not in us. We may deny him in our *character* by the love of ease, of riches, or by loving or enjoying the lusts of the flesh, or by desiring "the honor that comes from men." And we may deny him in our outward appearance, by a "proud look," or "costly apparel," or by "conformity to the world," or by any uncourteous or wrong behavior. In all these and many other things, we deny that Christ is our Master; and herein we publicly confess that we will not and do not have this man to rule in and reign over us.

COMMUNION WITH NATURE'S WORKS.

In our intercouse with the world, we need and must have much grace, to keep ourselves always in the love of God. The society of friends, and the in-

fluence of social life, are unfavorable to devotion, unless the whole soul and body be presented a living sacrifice. The lusts of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and pride of life, are mingled more or less with the enjoyment arising from earthly friendships; and hence we find it almost impossible to be much in company and not suffer loss. "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin;" and few, indeed, are able to retire from the social circle, and return to the closet, having kept the mind stayed upon God.

The author of our being is ever ready and willing to give his creatures ability to learn, and power to obey, his requirements. His truth is able to make us wise unto salvation, and in believing and obeying it we receive grace sufficient for the duties and trials of to-day; and grace for the morrow we do not need. There is an expression of the divine will in the circumstances that now exist, and in the changes now transpiring around us; and these, with the written word which discerns and proves all things, are sufficient to teach us what we ought to do. In order to learn and know always how to "do always those things that please God," we must not only "search the Scriptures daily," but watch also and attend to every intimation of the Divine will as it is communicated in the daily events of life.

The natural world also has a tongue that speaks without ceasing, and the listening ear can hear and understand its communications. There is a lesson in the sunbeam, and in all the variations that mate-

rial objects present to our view. The green fields, the ripe fruit, the frost, and the passing cloud, in solemn silence, acknowledge they have been with God. They invite our meditations, and bid us learn of Him who made them all.

Rational and moral beings alone are far from God, and these alone refuse to acknowledge and submit to the claims and order of his government. The natural world never denies its Creator, and never refuses obedience to every intimation of his will. But social beings are at variance with their Maker, and their words and works are opposed to the principles and laws of his government. For this cause we cannot enjoy and be in harmony with the friendship of the world, and not become estranged from God.

NECESSITY OF ABIDING IN CHRIST.

It is for me to abide in Jesus. If I abide not in him, I cannot continue in his love. Out of Christ I cannot know or love God, and can know only his displeasure in the absence of all good. The promises are yea and amen, only in Christ. In Christ all that he hath is mine. Out of Christ, God is not my Father or Friend, and no promise or hope of any good belongs to me. Precious Redeemer, give me always to abide in thee, else my soul will famish and die, and the grace thou hast bestowed upon me be in vain.

The Lord is my God, and I live, and move, and

have my being in him. He has and ever will have an interest in the work of his hands, and nothing can happen to his creatures, which he does not foresee and permit. Why, then, should I be troubled about what now is, or will be? Whatever may come to me, is simply under existing circumstances, an expression of the will of God, and I know his will is infinitely better than my choice. Suffering is not sin, but is the natural and necessary effect of sin, and is of divine appointment; hence, it is doubtless as good and profitable to suffer the will of God, as it is to obey it. The Lord loves the patient, resigned sufferer, as he loves the zealous and cheerful doer of his will. I must necessarily suffer much in consequence of sin, both in myself and others; but this suffering is good, because it is according to the Divine will, and is given me of God, "who doeth all things well." I would, therefore, only desire and choose the will of God, however mysterious or painful the expression may be, and would only fear and avoid any violation of his will, as the only cause of positive evil to myself or others. I have nothing to do but keep myself instantly in the will of God, or in other words, live and abide in Christ.

Knowledge and power belong to God. The ignorant and guilty must learn and obey, and while we are waiting in patient submission, an invisible agency may be doing what we think not of; and may bring to pass the event we greatly desired in the use of such means as we had supposed would surely pre-

vent its accomplishment. We understand not the way that he takes; our knowledge is limited to a point, while infinite wisdom comprehends in every event, the end from the beginning.

BREVITY OF HUMAN LIFE.

The whole term of man's probation is very brief. We live on earth a little season, and then die and are seen no more. Our life is but an hour—a moment—and our change comes. We pass from our present state and commence another life which runs on even through infinite and unmeasured duration. How little we can learn, and how little we can know in this present state. We are like the infant which this morning first saw the light. It lies unconscious of its helpless condition, and unless provided for by some inteiligence above itself, will never leave the place where it lies. It is too ignorant to be sensible of its own wants, and too helpless, without aid, to accept of that which it most needs. At present it has no conceptions of what it may hereafter understand. In a few months it may learn a mother's name, and learn, also, from her kind hand all its wants are supplied. Her presence is a perpetual source of gladness and sweet repose, and the love and ability of the parent are the sure support and safety of her child. The confidence and trust reposed in the parent are unlimited, until he finds she is not able to supply or prevent all his wants. He may and does rest securely in a mother's love, as far as

her ability is sufficient to sustain him, and when years increase, he doubts not, if faithful and obedient, he will inherit the best portion an earthly parent can give.

The short period of man's probation is only the infancy of his existence. In a few years he may learn the name, "Our Father who art in heaven," and this precious name is the foundation of unlimited confidence; an ever-present, all-sufficient resting place. Herein he perceives the wisdom and love that caused him to be, and that now sustains and preserves his being. Like the infant, he is ignorant and dependent, and every hour must receive wisdom and support from our Father in heaven. His helpless condition requires him to repose all confidence in the love and protection of his heavenly Friend, and in the exercise of simple faith and unlimited trust become as a little child. During this infantile state, though seventy years be numbered therein, yet is he able to learn but a few things. If diligent and faithful, he may learn the only source from whence all spiritual and temporal good cometh, and may learn to seek and find his support there. Herein is contained the substance of his highest wisdom and knowledge. Hereafter he may learn greater things, for it doth not yet appear what we shall be and we must wait till our change come before we can understand many things, or be truly enlightened; neither is it necessary in this life to know but a few simple truths. If we have attained the first

principles of wisdom, and learned to fear God, and depart from evil, we have learned the things that belong to our peace, and if faithful herein we shall not greatly err. We may pass on through life's short journey, and not be overcome by evil, if we have learned to ask and receive help of God. The safety and support of the infant is not in himself but in his parent. The prosperity and happiness of helpless mortals are not secured by their own knowledge or strength, but are the result of the wisdom and goodness of our heavenly Father.

The journey of human life, from the cradle to the grave, is beset with dangers. There are many dark places and alluring paths, wherein we are liable to be snared and taken. But if we live as seeing Him who is invisible, and continually strive to enter in at the strait gate, we have the promise of our Guide we shall never be confounded or ashamed. The safety and success of this journey are of the Lord, and to commit our souls without reserve to his guidance, and rest with unlimited confidence in his protection, is the beginning and end of our wisdom here.

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

A suffering, self-denying life, is my present portion. Doubtless this is necessary, and perhaps it cannot be otherwise than that I should feel much inward affliction—much self-reproach and grief of spirit, in dying to sin, and being crucified to the

world. I know sin is the great evil, which I fear and hate above all things, and yet in all things to separate myself from it, is like cutting off the right hand, or plucking out the right eye. It is only the spirit's power working through mighty faith that can make me able to avoid the appearance of evil. But this is the way to be saved, and though it be with fear and trembling, I must work out my salvation, or have nothing but sin and its consequences, for my portion. I must believe, watch and pray without ceasing, in order to endure till this great work be accomplished.

The words and example of my Redeemer are the light and strength of my heart, and if I follow and trust in him, he will not leave me to perish. He has taught me, and made me know, there is no privilege so great, no condition in life so desirable, as to live as he lived, and be as he was, in the world. But my faith is too weak. I admire his character and example, and love his commandments, and yet it is not in me to be like him. Why am I so slow of heart to believe, and take up the cross and bear it after Jesus. I suffer and obey, but not willingly and joyfully. I submit my cause to him, but not instantly; and resign myself to his will, but not without hesitation. Why am I not as willing to lose and suffer, as I am to gain and enjoy; or rather why not more willing, since I have the suffering, cross-bearing life of Jesus before me, for my example and guide? Why am I restless or fearful when exposed to censure, and why am I grieved and impatient

when friends suffer wrongfully in their goods or reputation? These things imply a lack of faith and confidence in God, and want of submission to his will. For this cause I am displeased with myself, and unreconciled to my state, because I feel and fear it is not what God can approve and love.

I must have an increase of faith, otherwise I cannot be renewed in the divine image, and love and obey as I ought. Lord, increase my faith, for without help from thee, I can do nothing. Daily I seem reduced to the necessity of believing my prayers are accepted and answered, with no other evidence for thus believing, than the word and promise of God. There seems to be something almost presumptious in my faith, and yet I find no other way but to hold fast and believe my petitions now are, and shall be answered. The word and promise of God are the only foundation of my faith, not any thing I have, or know of myself, or learn of others. I take the Bible as truth—take it as the present, living, speaking voice of God to me, and endeavor instantly to believe and obey it. There seems to be an overflowing fullness in Christ, so that whosoever looks to him in prayer, instantly receives all he can believe. Our blessings are limited by the weakness of our faith; not by his ability or willingness to bestow. He has said, "All I have is thine;" and herein are included his meek and lowly disposition—his submissive, self-denying spirit—the fellowship of his sufferings here, and his kingdom and glory hereafter.

Nothing is too hard for God. He is able at any time to banish our fears and remove our trials. Even when we believe there is no way of escape, he is able to deliver in a manner we thought not of. We may go into our closet, burdened with real and grievous afflictions, and return from thence free and joyful; and when we consider the cause of our grief, we find no sorrow in it, or perhaps we find it more an occasion of gladness than suffering.

In trusting in the Lord my apprehensions of present or future evil vanish away, and care and anxiety cease. Our Father careth for his children, and will and does make his grace sufficient in every time of need. Blind and helpless mortals cannot take care of themselves, and when we take into our own hands the management of things that concern us, and depend upon our own wisdom for success, we may well anticipate danger and loss, for most truly they will come upon us. The wisdom that cannot err must be our defence, and overrule for our good the events connected with our temporal and spiritual interests, otherwise all things work against us. But if our trust be in God, his help is sufficient, and if the powers that be, work against us, our best interests will only be promoted thereby. Therefore, be still, O my soul, and wait thou only upon God, for all my expectation is in him. The world, the flesh, and the enemy will work against me, and if possible destroy my labor and my faith; but though they

seem to prevail, they prevail not, and the effect of their doings shall only be their own destruction, while the humble and faithful shall derive great good from the very evils set in the way to trouble them.

CHAPTER IV.

Unity of the Members of Christ—The Natural World subject to its Creator—Personal Reflections—Moral Beings alone Rebellious—Disobedience the only Cause of Disorder—Coming and Glory of Christ's Kingdom—Trial and Submission—Reflections on the Character and Influence of Christ's Ministers—Fearful Prospects—Visit of a Devoted Preacher—Reasonableness of Self-denial.

UNITY OF THE MEMBERS OF CHRIST.

The Apostle represents the church of Christ as being one body composed of many individuals, and in the clearest and strongest language describes the unity and mutual dependence existing among the different members of this one body. "Now are ye the body of Christ and members in particular." "For we are all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one spirit." "And

whether one member suffer all the members suffer with it, or one member be honored all the members rejoice with it." "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him; and the eye cannot say unto the hand I have no need of thee, nor again the head to the feet I have no need of you."

The connection and sympathy which bind together the different parts of the natural body are strong and perfect. The head, hands, and feet, are so closely united and so mutually dependent, that one part or member cannot live only in a state of union with the whole. One mind or spirit is the life and strength of all the various parts of the physical system; and if one part be dissevered or broken off from the rest, it has no life in itself, and is dead and worthless. The life of the hand is the same life that quickens the whole body, and if the hand or any other member be disjoined from the rest it dies, because the life which quickens the whole, is *one*, and cannot be divided and a part go with it.

Even so the mind and spirit of Christ animates and keeps alive every particular member of his own living body; and they live, not because they have life in themselves, but because Christ lives in them. "As the branch cannot live or bear fruit, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in Christ." As the vine and its branches are united in one, having one root, one body, and one life; and are separate from all other trees of the forest, even so

the body and members of Christ are one, having one mind and one life, and are separate from the world of the ungodly.

Without the spirit of Christ we are none of his. Not having the life of Christ we live after the flesh; being quickened by an earthly, selfish life. But when the soul is regenerated and quickened by the spirit of truth, the earthly or selfish man dies, and the new man can say with the Apostle, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Herein is implied and made manifest the presence and power of that "quickening spirit" which creates anew, and keeps alive and unites in one, all the different and distant members of our Lord's body on earth and in heaven.

The Apostle writes "bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ," "For we are members one of another," also, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." How excellent and powerful the law that compels each particular member of the natural body, to feel and bear the pains and infirmities of each and every other member. If necessary, the eye or hand instantly relieve the feet, and in fulfilling this office, every other member is mutually benefited; or if the hand or feet cease to perform their own appropriate work and refuse to sympathize with an afflicted member, all the members are mutually injured.

Did any man ever yet hate his own flesh, or can any living member of our Lord's body hate, or sep-

arate himself from his brother, or withhold from him the aid and sympathy his necessities require. Separation is death; union is life; and the bond and spirit of Christian union is love. "He that dwelleth in love abideth in Christ," being renewed and kept alive by his quickning spirit. "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death," and hence receives not the inspirations of a heavenly and spiritual life; and being spiritually dead, is not united but separate from the living body. Our Lord identifies himself with his members, and acknowledges what is done to one of the least of them as being done to himself. "In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

The Lord is the strength of "his hidden ones." He gives to each their measure of grace and truth, and appoints them a place where they must contend for the faith according to their gifts, and labor to build up and convert into a holy temple "the habitation of God through the spirit." The members of Christ are the opposing power arrayed against the rulers of the darkness of this world. The power and influence of the Destroyer are ever employed to divide the unity, and defile the purity of the temple of God. The devices and wiles of the Deceiver are constantly operating in a thousand ways to injure and subvert the peace and harmony of our Lord's family on earth; therefore every member is exposed to danger and suffering, and the only place of safety is in a state of watchfulness and prayer, and spirit-

ual union with the body of Christ. The child of God is never alone because of himself he could do nothing, but in being joined to the Lord and to every member of Christ, he may boldly say, more and greater are they that be for us, than all that can be against us.

The whole world lieth in the wicked one, and the prince of darkness will ever exert his utmost strength in the defence and support of his own cause. His willing subjects are faithful and active, united in one common object; and though they may hate and war with each other, yet will they lose no opportunity of advancing their common interest. But the strength and influence of the enemy are limited; he can go the length of his chain, but no farther; were it not so a remnant could not be saved.

The Lord of heaven and earth is the light and life of his people, and he knoweth and keepeth them that are his; therefore the salt of the earth shall remain and exert its saving influence, until wicked men and their works are fitted for destruction. Then shall the saints take the kingdom and possess and enjoy it forever. The present is a time of scourging and purifying, a time of warfare and trial. Victory is certain and it will be perfect and glorious, but now it does not appear what we shall be, nor when the conflict will be finished. We must wait yet a little season until our Lord comes to be glorified *in* his saints and to be admired *in* all them that believe. Then shall our life which is now hid with

Christ in God be made manifest, and when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.

THE NATURAL WORLD SUBJECT TO THE CREATOR.

The material world lies passive in the hand of the great Creator. The laws that govern and hold in subjection all material things are perfectly obeyed. Every thing speaks and acts for God. The grass in the field bends before its maker. The cloud, the rain, and the dew yield implicit obedience to him who employs them; and the bud, the blossom and the fruit appear in their own proper season, and never violate the order of his arrangements. In every place order and perfection are manifest, and every where we behold a world of objects, that exist only to accomplish the will and pleasure of Him who made them.

MORAL BEINGS ALONE REBELLIOUS.

Can it be that in the midst of so much harmony and excellence, I remain imperfect, and walk disorderly. Can it be that I must live a worthless and deformed creature, where all around is lovely and useful. Shall my poor soul abide alone, and never wear the impress of perfection and holy obedience; nor ever reflect the image and beauty of Him who hath done all things well. He spake, and his works were created, he commanded, and they were estab-

lished, and the same word has said, "Be ye holy for I am holy." His word is powerful and shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish the thing whereunto it is sent. A sinful, worthless creature shall be renewed in knowledge and true holiness, and ever more reflect the image and glory of the great Creator. Then shall my soul live and act in harmony with nature's works, and never cease to admire and enjoy those divine perfections that are manifest in all his arrangements.

The world of matter is but "a reservoir of means" made ready for his use, and instantly employed in doing his pleasure; not one particle is useless, not one atom is wanting, but altogether, constitute one perfect harmonious whole. Rational beings alone are they who produce confusion, and derange the order of the Creator's beautiful and perfect works; and man, for whom all these things were made, is the only creature that will deform and destroy them all. O Lord, when shall thy creatures be reconciled to thee, and live and move in harmony with thy laws, and with all things thou hast made. This is thy purpose concerning them, and this is according to thy word; and these days and years are perfecting that which thou hast before appointed to be done. Thy spirit's power is working great changes in the moral and spiritual condition of earth's inhabitants, and preparing the way for the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdom of our Lord. Who can tell what is now preparing to be done, or who

can behold at one view the whole world of mind, and say what a day may bring forth.

The kingdom will come, and the will of God be done on earth as it is in heaven. For this we are taught to pray, and there is nothing in this sin-disordered world that can avert or turn away the answer of this prayer. The prince of darkness and his servants united, cannot prevent or even for a moment delay the fulfillment of one divine promise or one prophetic word. All shall be fulfilled in their own order and finished in their own proper season. Sinful mortals may destroy their own souls, and their own works, and their hopes and expectations may perish; but the word of God stands, and is being fulfilled while wicked men are preparing themselves and their works for destruction. The counsel of the Lord waiteth not for any, but is ever advancing the perfection of the saints, and gathering from the ruins of our fallen world a few who believe in Jesus and are being saved. Thou Lord wilt save that which was lost, and make all things new, and the world shall be filled with thy glory and praise. Confusion and every evil work shall cease, and order and love remain forever. A remnant shall be saved, and the earth shall be restored and live again in that original state of harmony and perfection, as when man in innocence walked among the trees of the garden and held converse with his Maker.

TRIAL AND SUBMISSION.

July, 1844.]

These are days of trial and peculiar temptation. I seem to be forsaken of God, and left without comfort or communion with Christ, unless it be communion with his sufferings. I am slow of heart to believe, and dull of understanding to learn what I ought to do. I cannot labor for this world's pleasant things, because I have no pleasure in them; and were they now freely presented for my acceptance, it would pain me to turn my thoughts from the Supreme Good long enough to examine them. Thy gifts O Lord are good only as thou givest thyself in them; and labor is profitable and pleasant only when thou dost appoint the work and thyself work with me in doing it. Thou needest not my service nor can I make my time or strength profitable to thee, but I need to be sustained and employed of thee, otherwise I know not what to do, and am restless and complaining.

Every thing in my own soul witnesses against me, yet I trust in the Lord; and though he leave me to be tempted and tried, yet will I trust in him, and wait for his salvation. I believe the work of grace is being accomplished in my heart, though I understand not the way that He takes. Be it unto me even as Thou wilt, and though clouds and darkness are within and round about, I know not but darkness itself may be the chosen instrument for communicating light. Therefore I will not pray, or wait

for comfort or joy, but wait upon God, and thankfully accept what is given, knowing it is the Lord and that he doeth all things well.

REFLECTIONS ON THE CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE OF CHRIST'S MINISTERS—FEARFUL PROSPECTS.

August, 1844.]

The past week have attended Conference, and saw nearly two hundred Preachers there. The appearance and conversation of Ministers generally, their habits of living and personal influence have suggested many interesting inquiries, and occasioned many solemn and fearful reflections. These are the Ambassadors for Christ, who stand in his stead, and beseech mankind to be reconciled to God. They preach Christ crucified, and proclaim the truth that is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him. But are they themselves crucified with Christ, and saved by the truth they preach.

Truly there is something amazing and mysterious in the present state of the Church. The experience and habits of many acceptable and popular preachers do not seem to be in accordance with the simplicity and purity of a holy, cross-bearing life. Many in their personal appearance and conversation, do not seem to be a savor of Christ, and separate from the world; nor is it manifest they love not its honors or good things. They do not appear to be free indeed, and strong in the Lord to do and suffer all things for Christ's sake. How can these

things be, and why is it that many acceptable Teachers and Pastors of the church do not confess and exemplify in their experience and conduct the fulfillment of the promises and requisitions of the Gospel they preach.

The disciples and witnesses for Jesus who are indeed a savor of Christ among men, must be unspotted from the world. They bear about in their bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus, and their works are manifest that they are wrought in God. Their names and influence may not indeed be popular among men, because the multitude do not love nor receive the testimony of Christ, and the children of the world who mind earthly things, will not honor and support those whose example and influence testify of them that their deeds are evil.

In these days persecution and reproach for Christ's sake are hardly known. Public opinion considers it honorable to profess Christianity, and very little sacrifice or self-denial are necessary in order to put on a form of godliness, and be identified with the Church. The narrow way is made broad and pleasant for the multitude to walk in, so that many believe they can find it and walk there without denying themselves daily, or forsaking all they have for Christ's sake. But the word of God has not widened the narrow way, and if the multitude have found a path where they can wear a form of godliness and not bear the cross, or suffer much tribulation, they have found a way where our Saviour did not walk,

and they follow another example than that which Christ set before us.

Have we not reason to fear these words of the Prophet are descriptive of our state: "This people draw near me with their mouth and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men;" and also, "For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep and hath closed your eyes, the prophets and your rulers; the seers hath he covered." In this time of general and dense darkness the true light shines, and we are favored above many other people. Our spiritual and temporal blessings are more and greater than were given to those who have gone before us. But though the light shines, and the smiles of a kind Providence distinguish this generation, we do not render corresponding obedience. Our privileges have not made us wise and humble and holy, and hence the light is to us like the pillar of fire to the Egyptians, "a darkness." We cannot return our talents with usury, and when our Lord shall require at our hand that which he hath given us to improve, how shall we appear before him.

VISIT OF A DEVOTED PREACHER—REASONABLENESS OF SELF-DENIAL.

Sept. 3d, 1844.]

That venerable friend, and devoted Minister of Christ has visited us again. Our Lord in compas-

sion has sent his own servant to teach us the way of life more perfectly. His counsel, his prayers and his example are to us a savor of Christ; and they will guide us in the good and right way, if we rightly consider and improve them. If the influence of his heavenly conversation, his faithful and kind instruction and reproof do not remain with us and reform our lives and character, our loss will be great.

We live upon the mediation of Christ. His death and sufferings procure for us the blessings of life and salvation. Every good thing is provided and freely given because he ever lives to intercede for us, that we may be holy and happy. We could not live, we could not enjoy, we could not hope, if Jesus had not loved, and given himself for us. How precious the knowledge of his name. We may rejoice in hope, when we estimate the blessings included in the great atonement made for lost sinners. Can we ask for more than is already prepared for them that know and love God; can we wish our Lord had suffered more, and purchased more and greater things for us; shall we not rather choose to suffer more for him, and cheerfully embrace the cross and drink the bitter cup, that we may know something of the fellowship of his sufferings for us. How can we claim and desire to enjoy the good things of this life, when they have all been purchased with the price of his blood. How can we ever complain and wish our sufferings less, and our mercies more. Is it not enough that our Lord did leave the felicity and glory

of heaven, and endure a life of poverty and deep affliction, and die a cruel and shameful death, to provide for us the joys of holiness and heaven; and now shall we ask in addition to these, the enjoyments and pleasant things of earth when we know they have cost so great a price.

While the Author of our salvation was laboring and suffering for us, he denied himself, and his whole life was one continued scene of toil and privation. He could have passed his days on earth in ease and plenty, and appropriated to himself all the pleasures and enjoyments of this life; but he did not. He considered not his own convenience. He lived not to enjoy but to do good, and save others from suffering. He endured to the end, and finished the work that was given him to do; therefore we live and are saved from the miseries we do not suffer. And now can it be that we, the miserable worthless objects of so great condescension and love—can it be that we claim and seek after a better portion in this life than was given to our Lord!

If Jesus had not died and rose again, we could never have known any thing but the horrors of darkness and miseries of despair. Every moment of our lives we have been partakers of the benefits and blessings of the great atonement, and hence it is impossible in our present state to conceive the depths of ignorance and misery from which we have been saved. In the hour of our deepest affliction we cannot tell how much greater our sufferings might be,

nor can we know how much less we suffer than our sins deserve. The chastisement of our peace was laid upon him, and he hath borne the iniquity of us all. Our sins mingled the bitter cup which he took from our lips and drank himself, that instead thereof he might give us the cup of blessing and salvation. He endured the cross, despising the shame that he might reconcile the world to himself, and that whosoever would, might come and take the water of life freely.

When we consider these things, can we wish to be free from trials and afflictions in this life. Can we look upon him whom our sins have pierced, and not be willing also to drink with him the cup of humiliation and sorrow, or can we look upon Christ crucified, and wish or expect to enter into his kingdom any other way than through much tribulation. Can we love Jesus and not choose to take up his cross. Can we love to be with him and like him, and not love to follow him, even from the manger to the judgment hall, and to Calvary.

CHAPTER V.

Christ the only joy of the Soul—Blessedness of communion with Jesus—Character and Conduct of those for whom all things work for good—Personal Reflections—Knowledge of Inward Sin—Confession—Self-Denial—Effects and general influence of Self-Indulgence—Personal Experience—Relation to God and his Creatures—Duty of Submission.

CHRIST THE ONLY JOY OF THE SOUL—BLESSEDNESS OF COMMUNION WITH JESUS.

Without thee O Lord, we can not do or enjoy any good. Without thee the earth would only be the habitation of miserable beings, destitute of happiness or hope. Thou alone art the light and glory of thy creatures. Without thee heaven itself would be destitute of loveliness or joy. Thy word is precious, more precious than all else that is valuable. The knowledge of thy name imparts strength and confidence to them who have known and received it. Thy truth is the light of the moral world, and thy

commandments are the desire and joy of them that keep them.

When the world and self retire, and are only seen and heard afar off, our Lord comes into his temple and takes possession of his own place. But when self and the world are entertained and heard to speak, the heavenly Visitor retires, and the still small voice is not heard. We cannot be in love with self, or with earthly things, and hold communion with Jesus; but when self and the world are crucified, then "Christ alone is heard to speak, and Jesus reigns within." Who would not forsake *all*, in order to come where Jesus is, and hear his words, and commune with him in his temple. Precious secret, yet known to them that love him and keep his commandments. Blessed Jesus thou art ever with us, though sometimes we go far away to find thee. Thou art always present speaking to them who will hear, and yet we often make great efforts to come to thee and know what thou dost say.

Happy indeed are they who have learned to retire from themselves and be still, and stay where thou art. Thou art not far off but very near to every one who will converse with thee, and it is thy good pleasure to manifest thyself to them as thou dost not to the world. If any man love thee and keep thy words thou wilt come and make thy abode with him. O precious *Immanuel* we are richer in the knowledge and possession of thy name, than we could be in the possession of earth's richest

treasures. It is better to abide with thee than to live in the world and enjoy all it can give. It is sweeter and more profitable to commune with thee in secret, than it is to hear what is done in the earth, or to gain the wisdom that comes from men. Thou art our wisdom, and we are never wise until thou art our only teacher, and our ears are deaf to every other voice but thine. The noise of the world may fill the outward ear, but we must listen only to the voice that speaks within. O come, and with us ever stay. Let us be acquainted with thee, and hold thee always in the strong embrace of perfect love. Thou art the only desire of the soul, the one altogether lovely; without thee we could not love heaven; we know and dread no other hell than separation from thee; and yet if thou cease to draw us we cease to come to thee, and if thou cease to keep us, we turn away and go from thee.

"Father to thee our soul we lift,
Our soul on thee depends;
Convinced that every perfect gift,
From thee alone descends.

"Thou all our works in us hast wrought,
Our good is all devine;
The praise of every virtuous thought,
And righteous word is thine.

"From thee through Jesus we receive
The power on thee to call;
In whom we are and move and live,
Our God is all in all."

CHARACTER AND CONDUCT OF THOSE FOR WHOM ALL THINGS WORK FOR GOOD.

All things work together for good to them that love God, and no good thing is withheld from them that walk uprightly. It is our Father's good pleasure that nothing shall harm or work against them that learn his commandments and keep them. He has made every thing subservient to their interest, and intends whatever is done shall be for their good, and nothing can counteract his pleasure or designs concerning them. The world, and life and death are their's. The pains and afflictions that attend them, are their profitable servants. Losses and disappointments are to them great gain, and trials of faith and patience more precious than gold. They dwell in an enemy's land, and their enemies are round about them, but no weapon formed against them can prosper. Their "place of defence is the munition of rocks, their bread also and their water shall be sure."

They are careful for nothing but to learn and do the will of God. This is their daily work, the only business of this short life. They labor only to serve and please Him who careth for them, and on whom they depend for such things as are necessary. They are not careful for their own personal wants, but careful to be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. They labor not for the meat that perisheth, nor do they lay up treasures upon earth, because it is not the will of their Master

to employ them in this manner. They live not for themselves, but for him whose servants they are, and hence they choose not their own place or employment, but are led and directed of him whose word and spirit are their wisdom and guide. They look not on things seen and temporal, but on things spiritual and eternal. In those they have no interest or pleasure—in these they find present riches and an exceeding great reward.

Their wisdom is not of the world; their strength is not in an arm of flesh; they walk by the light of the pure word, and in obeying its holy requisitions, are led into all truth. They are humbled and brought very low, yet always live above the world. They are poor and often weary in their labors, yet so rich and contented they need not nor desire the best earthly things. They are dependent and submissive, but of good courage and fear no evil. Their companions are the poor, and those that are lightly esteemed; yet their conversation is in heaven and their fellowship with the great Triune.

These are they who love God, and for whom all things work for good. They live by his word, and hence his commands and promises are and shall be fulfilled in them. They are indeed strangers on earth, and the world do not receive their testimony for Christ, nor perhaps even know or acknowledge them as the children of God. Their spirit and character are as it were hid from the observation of those who discern not nor love spiritual and heavenly

things. The way wherein they walk is narrow, and few there be that find it; but it is the only way marked out in the Word of God that leads from earth to heaven. Those who have learned of Jesus to be meek and lowly in heart, who follow his example and are led by his spirit, have found this way, and these alone are they for whom all the trials of probation and all the afflictions of this warfare work together for good. These are the light and salt of the earth, and these are they who die in the Lord and are blessed forever more.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS—KNOWLEDGE OF INWARD SIN—CONFESSION.

The past year like those that have gone before has been filled with mercies. Grace and truth have preserved me another year, and delivered me from many evils. Sometimes my soul has been afflicted and deeply depressed, but my sins have deserved more than I have suffered, and it is truly amazing that so many and great blessings should have been purchased and so freely given to a creature so worthless and unprofitable. But "Jesus hath loved me, I cannot tell why." The remembrance of my sins is painful, but to know what I am is more grievous than to know what I have done. It is not the outward act, but the corrupt fountain from whence all sinful actions flow, that makes me astonished and ashamed. When I consider this and know what I am, I am oppressed with anguish, and sink under the

burden of my own reflections. "In me, that is in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing."

For many years the spirit of truth has been striving to restore and save that which was lost; and yet after all that has been done I am still learning how vile I am. If I say I will do good it is far from me, and yet I am without excuse because I have not always loved that which was right, nor always followed the cross-bearing, self-denying example of Jesus as I might and should have done. Why should I bear the name of Christian when I am no more like Christ. "I loathe myself when God I see, and into nothing fall." Jesus lives to intercede for poor sinners, and hence the influence of grace and truth are continually preventing me from falling into a state of inexpressible wretchedness. It becometh me to sink very low, and not again think of myself more highly than I ought to think. Why should I ever claim, or think I ought to receive the favors or friendship of any creature. If I am not too proud and ignorant to know myself, I shall always know my place is the lowest place, and my duty and privilege to be servant of all.

In days past I have been willing to wash the feet of the saints, and to serve those who were thankful and worthy; but what is it for me, the most abject creature, to do that which all holy and pious persons have loved to do. If our divine Master could wash the feet of his disciples, and live and labor among human beings to do them good, I may well consider

it a privilege to serve even the lowest and most unworthy of his creatures. Ministering spirits in heaven and faithful saints on earth, may, if they please, select the lovely and excellent as proper objects of their regard and benevolence, but for me it is good and profitable to be subject to all, and cheerfully deny myself to serve the unthankful and the evil.

These reflections are peculiarly applicable to my present circumstances and character, and they are given me in the beginning of this new year that I may be instructed and benefited by them. Henceforth these sentiments must not only regulate the outward conduct but these truths must inspire and govern the feelings and intentions of the heart; otherwise if I walk not in this light, this confession will witness against me when I am judged, and I shall be speechless.

SELF-DENIAL—EFFECTS AND GENERAL INFLUENCE OF SELF-INDULGENCE.

An Apostle has written, "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means when I have preached to others I myself should be a cast-away." The body should be kept in the place of a servant, and never allowed to assume or maintain the authority of a master. For a little season the soul must remain in this earthly house, and in order to make the body a convenient and useful habitation for the spirit, its exercise, food

and clothing must be adapted to promote this end. To be subject to the flesh, and compelled to feed and clothe the body in a particular and costly manner is opposed to self-denial, and contrary to the example and spirit of Christ; and the soul that is willing to be employed in gratifying the lusts of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or pride of life, is far from enjoying the liberty wherewith Christ makes his servants free. It is not the design or intention of the Maker of our bodies and Father of our spirits, that his creatures should make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. Their employment and pleasure should consist in things more excellent than these, and these inferior things should be counted as dross, and have no power to control the affections or the will.

If the body be not kept under, its claims are unreasonable and severe, and yet many yield themselves servants to obey its imperative requisitions, because they love subjection more than they love victory. We often destroy our own comfort, expose health, and violate a good conscience, because we are unwilling to assert our freedom and maintain the warfare against the lusts of the flesh and course of this world. Our tables are spread with luxuries not healthful or necessary, because we love these things more than we love self-denial and the spirit of a sound mind. Our clothing is fitted up with much unnecessary care and expense, simply because the desire of the eye, or "the fashion" require it to be so.

The customs of the world, and the love of what is earthly and sensual, hold in bondage an immense multitude of willing captives who desire no other or better portion than they expect to enjoy in these things. And hence the command to mortify the deeds of the body with its affections and lusts, has become almost obsolete. We live and move under the dominion of the "elements of the world," and bondage is not only so easy and natural, but so general that few indeed can be found who walk in the clear light of Christian liberty and daily self-denial. An Apostle of other days could say, and his labors, his fastings, and voluntary poverty prove the assertion true, "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection." But in these days how few the number of zealous, self-denying laborers, who do not and will not make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof.

In preparing our daily food, we may choose that which is most healthful and abundant, and in providing clothing for the body we may select that which is most comfortable and convenient, and whatsoever is more than this cometh of evil. We are indeed reduced very low and unable to contend successfully against the prince of this world, when we are troubled about many things, and careful to inquire what we shall eat and what we shall drink and how we shall be clothed. The pleasures of sense and the changing fashions of a changing world, are the present portion of them who know not our

Lord Jesus Christ and obey not his gospel. But how can those who have come out from among them and are separate, who have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts; how can these reckon themselves as having any interest or pleasure in these things. In Christ they overcome the world, and in Christ they cannot desire and enjoy earthly things so much as they desire and enjoy the victory over them.

What shall we do, when those called Christians consent to be conformed to the world, and acknowledge themselves compelled to be in fellowship with the lovers of pleasure, in order to retain their friendship and have influence among them. Are not our prospects gloomy indeed when the professed disciples of Christ dare not assert and maintain their freedom, and keep these things under their feet. What can be done when the servants of the great King are unwilling to be a separate and peculiar people, but consent to acknowledge by their conduct they have an interest and pleasure in those things that belong to the subjects of the prince of darkness. In these days the lusts of the flesh and the pride of life have led captive the visible Church, and the spirit and presence of her divine Master have vanished almost out of her sight in her connection and fellowship with the spirit of the world.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE—RELATION TO GOD AND HIS CREATURES—DUTY OF SUBMISSION.

Within a few weeks past a measure of grace and

truth have fallen upon my darkened understanding, and it is now given me to perceive more clearly the relation I sustain to my fellow beings, and also to feel more sensibly my helpless, dependent condition, and deep obligations to Him from whom all good cometh. It is given me to understand that my fellow beings are the creatures of God—they are his subjects and his servants, not mine; and because they stand thus related to him, they cannot be indebted to me only on the ground of our mutual relation and indebtedness to God. I can never merit or deserve the least favor from the hand of my Creator to whom I am indebted for all things, and can therefore have no reasonable claims upon his creatures for any thing due to me only on the ground of their obligation to him.

I am dependent upon my Maker alone for all things, and whatever I receive from his creatures I receive from him. If I had derived existence from myself, or could now exist a moment without help from God, I might with more propriety make some demands upon his creatures, and compel them to "pay me that thou owest." But an unworthy, unprofitable servant, whose very being and continued existence depend wholly upon the unmerited mercy and goodness of God, may be silent and thankful if permitted to live among his creatures, and know and have nothing but to serve and be subject to every one. It becometh me gratefully to accept my place or any employment his goodness may appoint, and if it be

to serve the least and most unworthy, and receive from them no grateful acknowledgments in return, all is right; since it is not man but the Proprietor of the Universe that employs and sustains me in serving them that are dependent upon him.

The creatures of God are also the objects of his compassion and love, and he hath never forsaken or ceased to do them good. From hence I learn it is my duty and privilege to love and do good to all for his sake. This consideration also enforces the strongest obligations to forgive men their trespasses, and strive to overcome evil with good. I am not called upon to do this because I am indebted or subject to any creature, nor because I hope to receive as much again, but because I am indebted and subject to the Creator, who requires me to improve the time and talents he gives me in this manner. If in these things I learn and do his will, he will take care of me. It is always his good pleasure to help those who cannot help themselves, and who are truly inclined to learn and to do what he requires, and to depend upon him alone for what they need. His grace and truth enables them to learn what manner of persons they are, and to understand the relation they sustain to their Creator and to their fellow-creatures, and also to perceive the duties and responsibilities consequent upon these relations. This wisdom is not of the world, but cometh from above; and when these truths reach the understanding and it is given us to know these things, happy are we if we do them.

CHAPTER VI.

Religious Experience—Trials Proportioned to Grace—Intercessions of Christ—The Cross—Where and What it is—The Multitude choose another Way—Various Forms of Temptation—Its Necessity, and Advantages resulting therefrom.

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE—TRIALS PROPORTIONED TO GRACE—INTERCESSIONS OF CHRIST.

To-day the enemy hath desired to sift me as wheat but I know in whom I have believed, and though for a moment he may seem to prevail, he cannot destroy. I am troubled and perplexed yet will not despair, but learn obedience from the things I suffer. In this hour of darkness and trial, I need all the grace and truth received in days past in order to keep me from entering into temptation. A little while ago it was given me to understand my true character more perfectly, and how I ought to order my behavior toward my fellow creatures. But now I have reason to be troubled and greatly to fear lest I be drawn

out of the way, and the light that was given me become darkness. I learn again and again that my strength is weakness, and my wisdom folly; and I learn also that new duties and trials come upon us, in measure according to the grace and truth received. An increase of spiritual strength is followed by stronger temptations, and the exercise of stronger faith and more self-denial are necessary in order to overcome.

This is not our rest, neither is the warfare ended when great victories are gained. We may receive grace for grace and be endued with power from on high, but as our strength is so shall our work be, and temptations and trials shall be measured by our ability to bear them. Where much is given, much is required; and when grace and truth are greatly increased, labor and suffering will be so much more abundant. The help of the spirit and wisdom from above are not given that we may be happy and satisfied, but given that our souls may be renewed in knowledge and true holiness. In our present state it is more profitable to suffer than to enjoy—better to be crucified than to be revived. Trials and temptations search the heart and discover what is wrong there, and many come forth as gold after being purified in the furnace of affliction.

The intercessions of Christ always provide grace to bear, or a way to escape from every temptation, therefore the faithful shall endure, and the fiery darts of the wicked shall not consume, but work to-

gether for good. We owe every thing to the intercessions of Christ, and at present cannot conceive what our state would be, or what a day would bring forth, if our Lord should say, "Let them alone." Who can endure in that fearful, dreadful hour, when Jesus will be an advocate with the Father no more, and when the rewards of retribution take the place of the fruit of his death and intercessions. The mercies and blessings now freely given to all for the sake of the great Mediator, will then pass away from them that are unreconciled to God, and nothing can remain but unmingled suffering without any possible way of escape. These may be the last days of warfare, but these are not the days of hopeless despair. The powers of darkness are restrained, and to-day Jesus lives to intercede, and is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.

THE CROSS—WHERE AND WHAT IT IS—THE MULTITUDE CHOOSE ANOTHER WAY.

The Jews said to our Lord, "Come down from the cross and we will believe." But the blessed Saviour did not answer nor obey this insolent command; nor give this evidence of his Mesiahship to them who required it, but in silence remained on the cross and meekly bowed his head and expired there. The proud, unbelieving Jews, expected their Saviour and King would come into the world clothed with majesty and power, and believed not that any humiliation or suffering would be manifest in his life or

character. Their views of divine excellence and glory were in accordance with thoughts and opinions of men, and hence they would not receive nor acknowledge the meek and lowly Jesus to be the Lord of heaven and earth and Saviour of the world.

If the blessed One had appeared in the splendor of state, and assumed the character and authority of this world's great men, instead of taking the form of a servant, the Jews would have received and worshipped him. But he came in the spirit and power of that grace and truth which is life and salvation to them that believe, and he came to save his own lost, ruined creatures, and they would not receive him.

In these days many would believe in Jesus if he would come down from the cross and appear to them in such a manner as they desire and expect. If he would come with the riches and pleasures of the world many would receive him gladly, and be in haste to crown him Lord of all. If he would lay aside his humiliations and sufferings and cry, "If any man will come after me let him please himself, and enjoy the world, and he shall be my disciple," the multitude would believe and follow him.

But the blessed Jesus did not descend from the cross, neither will he come to us in any other character than the meek and lowly crucified One. If we will receive and worship our Lord, we must receive and worship him as he is; and if we will be with him in heaven, we must be like him on earth. We must partake of his sufferings here if we will

take his crown hereafter. The only way into his kingdom is through much tribulation, and if we will sit with him on his throne we must take up his cross and bear it until we are crucified thereon.

The condition and evidence of our discipleship are self-denial and the cross. Without these, we cannot know or worship him who said, "If any man will come after me let him deny himself." We cannot come to Christ and follow him, only in learning the spirit of his words and example, and living by them; and in learning of Jesus we learn the crucifixion of self—the renunciation of the world, and the fellowship of his sufferings. We learn to love our enemies, to do good to them that hate us, and to suffer patiently for well doing. In learning and doing these things we are following Christ and being renewed in his image, and herein we find self-denial and the cross. This spirit of obedience and submission is opposed to the spirit and feelings of the natural heart, and to the course of this world. The carnal mind is enmity against the mind of Christ, and indeed against the spirit of the whole gospel, and hence we do not love and keep his commandments only so far as self is denied and given up to expire on the cross.

Because his commands are grievous and the flesh and spirit are mortified in keeping them, the lovers of pleasure and friends of the world have invented a form of godliness in which self-denial and the cross are hardly known. They have taken our Lord down from the cross, and laid him in a pleasant, honorable

place, where humiliation and self-denial do not come. They have found a way to follow Christ without daily bearing his cross; a way wherein they are not compelled to forsake all they have, and suffer reproach and persecution for his sake. In this way the multitude are willing to walk, for it is indeed broad and not narrow, and those who desire to serve God and mammon can find it.

But the truth as it is in Jesus, and the way of his commandments remain unchanged, the same now as when they said, "Have any of our rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" The truth has not joined in affinity with the traditions of men, nor conformed to their opinions, but is like its divine Author, inflexible in its requisitions; the same to-day and forever. We may indeed call darkness light, and error may be established and defended in high places, but error cannot prove itself true, nor darkness make itself light.

Jesus of Nazareth, the King of Saints, came first to his own chosen people and they received him not. The great majority rejected him; they despised his simple appearance and denied his testimony. He was meek and lowly and made himself of no reputation, and they could not receive and honor him as their King, nor see any beauty that they should desire him. They required him to clothe himself with splendor and power, and come down from the cross and save himself, and then they said they would believe. They loved the praise of men and the gran-

deur of the world, and in their estimation of these things they verily thought their judgment was like the judgment of God; and if the Babe of Bethlehem had taken the honors of the world to himself, they would have paid him their devotions and followed him.

But even then, without these signs, a few did receive him, and discern in the humble, rejected one, the Son of God. They saw in the man Christ Jesus, even in his humiliations and sufferings, and real manifestation of Divine power and glory, and those that saw and believed, were made partakers of the same Divine nature, and partakers also of the humiliations and sufferings of their Divine Lord. In these perilous times, when a form of godliness is popular in the world, and a profession of Christianity costs nothing, a few discern the living way of self-denial and the cross. A few like the Apostle bear about in their bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus, and have fellowship with his sufferings, and desire to know nothing but Christ crucified. These are perhaps of no reputation, and like Peter and John, "unlearned," only as they have been with Jesus and learned of him; but these are they of whom it may be said, "one shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight." These are the little ones who belong to Christ, and are honored of God, who hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty.

VARIOUS FORMS OF TEMPTATION—ITS NECESSITY AND ADVANTAGES.

"Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation." A cunning and powerful enemy attends our steps and employs his strength and skill in trying to turn us out of the way. He watches our going out and coming in, and by every means intends to hurt or destroy. He appears not in a visible or tangible form, but works most successfully in darkness, seeking those who are ignorant of his devices. He seldom gains an advantage when his time and method of attack are understood. Accordingly he works by means of such instruments as will best conceal him from view, being hid within or beyond the agencies he employs. Hence we are often deceived in supposing the agents that try us, to be the cause of our trials, and enter into temptation because we discern not between the occasion and the cause.

The instruments employed in transmitting his fiery darts, may be the members of our own family, our neighbor, or some unfavorable circumstances may greatly afflict our souls, and be the medium through which strong temptations come upon us. We naturally regard these instruments as having power of themselves to afflict us as they will, and hence are inclined to believe there is no way of escape but to resist and overcome them with their own weapons. Herein we are deceived, and fight as those who beat the air, or rather we fight with the enemy against ourselves. We often assume a defensive po-

sition, when submission is the only way of victory, and increase the power of temptation in striving to subdue or separate ourselves from the instrument that afflicts. When we walk in the light we are not ignorant of Satan's devices, and know whence temptations come; and, instead of opposing means or agencies, we resist the enemy himself, who is soon defeated when no other than spiritual weapons are employed against him.

Temptation is the common lot of all, and must necessarily attend probationers to the end of their warfare; but instead of injuring it can only do good to them that are faithful. When the enemy has ceased to contend for our souls he may contend for our life, and doubtless will contend for our peace and usefulness as long as we remain in this world. But his chain is measured, and he can never throw a dart beyond his limits. He may prepare the furnace that consumes the dross but the gold is left purer than before. The fire has no power to hurt the pure metal, it can only separate from it those earthly mixtures that render it unfit for a place among the Master's precious things.

It is for our profit, our great advantage, that we be tempted and tried. If faithful, every trial works out for us a greater good than we could otherwise obtain. The discipline that tries our souls, makes us able and willing to receive the grace we need, and being strengthened thereby, we are prepared to endure stronger trials, which are all intended "for our

profit that we might be partakers of his holiness." But in order to overcome and gain the advantage in every temptation we must watch and pray without ceasing, for the snare is set in our path, and we find it in the time and manner we least expect, and if in that instant we are not watching unto prayer, our feet are taken and we suffer loss.

We need not fear nor labor to avoid temptation, neither should we desire to find it, but as we expect clouds and storms to succeed each other in almost constant succession, so it is good to expect trials of faith and patience daily, and be willing to endure them till the warfare be accomplished. Travellers anticipate rest not in the way, but at the end of their journey. Laborers expect wages when their work is done. It is not expedient for strangers to enjoy the comforts of their own peaceful home while passing through an enemy's land. If exposed to many privations, they will be more diligent to press onward and reach that better country where the toils of warfare are no more. Their home and treasures are not here; this is not their rest. The good things they see around them are not theirs; they belong to those who enter into temptation and have their portion in this life. The world will claim and will have its own, and whoever will overcome must give back and leave behind what belongs to it. In doing this they escape from many temptations which otherwise would follow and greatly afflict them.

But in gaining the victory we must meet and wrestle against stronger foes than the world or the flesh. The powers of darkness often gather round the soul and obscure the light in such a manner, we can only wait in sorrow and amazement until the shadow be overpast. In these seasons hope seems almost to fail, and despair would quickly swallow us up, if we did not learn to live as seeing him who is invisible. When divine consolation is imparted and the light shines on our path, it is no great thing to be strong in the strength of grace, and cheerfully endure every trial. But to be still, and wait patiently in hope, when all is gone, requires great faith, and a degree of submission in which the will of the creature sinks into the will of God. It would no doubt be our privilege to suffer greater things if our strength were not so small. We are easily discouraged and quickly cry for help; not for patience to endure, but for grace to relieve. We are neither able nor worthy to suffer much for Christ. We desire to follow our Lord and be like him, but we avoid his poverty and crucifixion, and thus keep ourselves far from him. We would gladly be with him in his temple, but we do not love to come to him through much tribulation.

Our Lord was led into the wilderness to be tempted, and he continued there in fasting and prayer many days and nights. No earthly friend could help him, and he contended alone against the prince of darkness. He was harmless and undefiled, yet the

enemy came to him, and "continued with him until he had ended all the temptation, and then departed from him for a season." Our great Exemplar became like one of us, and was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. It is necessary for the disciple to follow his Master, and enough for the servant to be as his Lord. In every temptation our Lord overcame. In every conflict he was victorious; yet the weapons he used were not carnal but spiritual. He did not resist means or instruments, but submitted himself and them that afflicted him, to Him that judgeth righteously. He did not break the soldiers spear, nor wither the hand that held it. He was led as a lamb to the place of scourging and execution, and when one of his enemies were wounded, he instantly healed the wound. He heard blasphemy and false testimony against himself, and yet threatened not, but meekly waited to suffer whatever might be done to him.

In this manner our Lord and Master endured temptation, and in this manner he overcame. The powers of darkness were permitted to contend against him until his life was taken from the earth; but his patient submission, was victory; his humiliation and poverty, honor and riches; and his sufferings and death, glory and immortality. He has left us an example that we should walk in his steps, and doubtless those who are chosen and faithful are called to know something of the fellowship of his sufferings in the flesh.

We are exhorted to take the whole armour of God that we may be able to stand the evil day, and in having done all to stand. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

CHAPTER VII.

The Children of God under the Jewish and Christian Dispensations—The Promises and Peculiar Blessings given to the Jewish Church compared with the Superior Privileges of Christians under the Gospel—The Fall and Punishment of God's Ancient People considered in reference to the Character and Prospects of his People under the Christian Dispensation.

The ancient Jewish Church were the distinguished and highly favored people of God. The Lord brought them out of Egypt and acknowledged them to be his own peculiar people. They were called and chosen to inherit greater blessings, and richer promises, than any other nation enjoyed. Unto them it was said, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. Fear thou not, my servant Jacob, saith the Lord, neither be dismayed O Israel; for lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from a

land of captivity. For thy Maker is thy husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall be called. For a small moment I have forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

"O thou afflicted and tossed with tempest and not comforted; behold I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.—And I will make thy windows of agate, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord and great shall be the peace of thy children. For I am with thee saith the Lord to save thee, and though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will not make a full end of thee, but I will correct thee in measure and will not leave thee altogether unpunished. And I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your Fathers and ye shall be my people and I will be your God."

These with many other exceeding great and precious promises, were the hope and the confidence of

the Jewish Church. Herein they trusted and verily believed their defence and their salvation sure. They knew that no other people were acknowledged and blessed of God as they were; no other nation held in their possession a revelation of the true God, and no other people professed to be governed by the laws and commandments of the King of heaven and earth. "Unto these pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises."

But all these exalted privileges; and the love and tender mercy of their God—the warning voice of their prophets and holy men—their enlightened piety and favorable condition, did not prevent their falling away from their elevated position, and losing all they held sacred and valuable. Their iniquities separated between them and their God, and their sins hid his face from them that he would not hear. Their Maker did not forsake them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail, but they departed from him, and separated themselves from his love, and from the fulfillment of the promises in which they trusted. As they were exalted very high and did not render corresponding obedience, and keep themselves in the love of God, so they were brought very low, and the things that should have been for their welfare, became their curse.

It was said to one of their faithful ones "Pray not thou for this people for their good, neither lift

up a cry or prayer for them neither make intercession to me, for I will not hear thee." The prophet also exposes their wickedness, and describes their character. He says, "The leaders of this people cause them to err, and they that are led of them are destroyed, and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof, for from the least of them even unto the greatest of them, every one is given to covetousness, and from the prophet even unto the priest, every one dealeth falsely."—"They have healed, also, the hurt of the daughter of my people, slightly saying, peace, peace, when there is no peace."

From the writings of the Prophets, and from the past and present history of the Jews, we learn that great and fearful judgements have fallen upon them. For many ages they have been a scattered and separate, and despised people; and have experienced in themselves the awful consequences of turning away from the holy commandments delivered unto them. They might have known the things that belonged to their peace, and continued to be a holy and happy people forever, but they would not.—They inherited the blessings and promises given to their fathers, but they did not love and keep his laws, nor continue steadfast in his covenant; therefore, wrath came upon them to the uttermost.

The prophet Amos, testified, saying, "behold the days come saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a

thirst of water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." And Isaiah prophesied, "therefore my people are gone into captivity because they have no knowledge, and their honorable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst."

Another prophet said "the Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary, he hath given up into the hand of the enemy, the walls of her palaces."

These fearful denunciations and reproofs, were spoken to that same favored people who were chosen to inherit the richest privileges, and who were even now, waiting for the fulfillment of their own precious promises. They did not believe that any good thing would fail of all that God has spoken concerning them, but were strong in the delusion that their unfaithfulness and unbelief did not, and would not separate them from the grace and favor of God.—They did not perceive nor understand that they had forfeited their own mercies, and that of all the good things promised them, not one remained.

The God of the Jews and the God of the Gentiles is no respecter of persons, but in every generation and among every people, they that fear the Lord and work righteousness, are accepted of him, and they that are rebellious or unfaithful must be exposed and punished. Blessings and peculiar privileges are prepared for, and promised to them that love the truth and walk in it. But for them that do not keep his commandments, nor walk according to

the light given them, their blessings are changed into cursing and their mercies are turned into judgments.

The dreadful miseries and humiliations that have followed those who were the chosen and peculiar people of God, are awful expressions of divine displeasure against sin. Herein we behold an impressive and fearful exhibition of these truths, "God does not look on sin with allowance, and will by no means clear the guilty." These things are written for our instruction, that we may learn humility and obedience from their presumption and their fall; and learn also, that precious promises and exalted privileges avail nothing, unless they are wisely and diligently improved.

The Gentile, or Christian world, receive through the Jews the knowledge and worship of the true God. Our Lord and Saviour came first to his own chosen people, and when the gospel of Christ had been faithfully preached among them, and they believed it not, the Apostle said to his brethren the Jews, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo we turn to the Gentiles. In the demonstration of the spirit, the Apostles first preached Christ crucified, to them who professed to know God, and who verily believed they were his beloved people; but because of the blindness and impenitence of their hearts, their preaching was to

them foolishness, and they could not discern therein, the wisdom and the power of God. After the gospel had been faithfully declared to the Jews, and they received it not, it was said to Paul in a vision "make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. Depart; for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." The apostle was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, but preached the gospel to the "uncircumcision," and many of the Gentiles believed on the Son of God, and received the blessings and privileges included in both the Jewish and Christian dispensations. The believing Jew, and the believing Gentile were no longer separated by any middle wall of partition, but were through faith made one in Christ. Both were called with the same holy calling, and through faith in him, were made partakers of the benefits and blessings of both the Old and New Testaments.

"Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," and life and immortality are brought to light in the gospel. In Christ the law and the promises are fulfilled, and in him we learn and know the things that are freely given to us of God. The spiritual and heavenly things which came with Christ into the world, are more and greater than any people ever before enjoyed. When Christ appeared, mankind were favored with a new and brighter manifestation of the divine presence and glory than the world had known before. The knowledge and the love of God were

but obscurely and imperfectly revealed until Christ came; in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell.

The children of God, or the Jewish Church were indeed a distinguished and highly favored people, even under their own dark dispensation. Moses, their great law-giver, said, "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgements so righteous, as all this law which I set before you this day?" But the glory of that dispensation, and the excellence of their statutes and judgements were lost in the superior excellence and brightness of the glorious gospel of Christ. Herein are displayed and made manifest the brightness of the Father's glory in the revelation of his Son, and in the atonement procured by his death. And herein, also, the children of God, all who believe and obey the gospel, are called and chosen to stand on higher and holier ground, and to sustain a nearer relation to God, and enjoy a more open and perfect communion with him, than did his ancient people in their best and most prosperous state.

In view of the benefits of the great salvation brought to us at the revelation of Christ, the heavenly host broke forth into a song of praise, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." The exalted privileges and

the great grace revealed in the new dispensation, are freely bestowed upon all who believe and obey the gospel. And herein "are given unto us many exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." These precious promises come from God, and hence are not only full of divine mercy and goodness, but they are also clothed with divine authority, and are declared to us, that we should receive and enjoy them. They are not declared that we may reject them, or refuse to experience their fulfillment; but the grace and truth revealed therein, are made manifest, that we may be renewed in knowledge and true holiness, and glorify God in our bodies and spirits, which are his. The duties and privileges of the gospel dispensation are made manifest, that the praise and glory of the Creator, might be continually extending and increasing in the earth. Herein it is given us to know the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all unrighteousness, from whence follows the exalted privilege, to be holy in heart and life, and in all manner of conversation. These superior privileges and heavenly attainments are freely presented for our reception, and as they are purchased and freely bestowed upon us, we are called and directly required to live by them. We cannot work out our salvation nor serve and glorify God according to his commandment, only in the reception and improvement of the grace and truth given for

this purpose. The requisitions of the gospel are according to the gracious ability therein conferred upon those who are enlightened by it; and these requisitions are imperative and unchangeable. It is a law of the kingdom that we should live according to our light and our privileges, and hence if we refuse to render unto God the improvement of the talents committed to our trust, we forfeit all, and incur the divine displeasure.

The Christian Church has been endued with power from on high, and the greatest and most sacred obligations rest upon her to maintain the character and position unto which she is called in the gospel. If she turn away from these claims, and fall back from her high and holy responsibilities, her character and prospects are like that people, "who could not enter in, because of unbelief; and whose iniquities separated between them and their God, and whose sins hid his face from them." We have heard the exhortation of the apostle, "be not high minded but fear, for if God spared not the natural branches take heed that he spare not thee. Because of unbelief the natural branches are broken off." They were separated from their own distinguished privileges; their house left unto them desolate, and the things that belonged to their peace, hid from their eyes. In the Christian Church also, no doubt the same measure of unbelief, or the same falling back from the duties and holy calling of the gospel, will meet the same, or a greater measure of the divine

displeasure, than has been the portion of his degraded and cast off people, who did not improve the privileges of a former dispensation.

The great Head of the Church has always, even before the more abundant effusion of his Spirit, when "great grace was upon them all," required his people to be holy and keep themselves separate from the things that are unclean; and surely, in the unsearchable riches of his grace in Christ Jesus, he has given freely and abundantly all things necessary to make them so. What the law could not do, and what the blood of bulls and goats sprinkled upon the unclean could not accomplish, is finished and made perfect in Christ. His grace is sufficient to work in and with them that are his, the fulfillment of every promise and every command; and hence arises the imperative obligation to be pure in heart and unspotted from the world, having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. The nature and effect of the claims of the gospel, and the absolute necessity of being conformed thereto, are described and enforced in this impressive and commanding precept: "without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

When the Son of God appeared in the flesh, he came first to that people who were from the beginning chosen to be his witnesses, and to manifest his glory on earth; thereby acknowledging and preferring them before any other people. When the Gentiles received Christ and believed the gospel, they

were no longer counted heathen, but were added to the people of God, and permitted to inherit with them the promises and blessings of the great salvation, that belonged first to the Jews, and secondly, to all them who love our Lord Jesus Christ. In every nation and in all ages, they that believe in Jesus and are saved from their sins are elected to be the chosen and peculiar people of God, and are called to come out from the world and be separate from everything unholy and unclean. They are called to come out from the unbelieving, unconverted world, and according to the priviliges of their superior dispensation required to be more holy and separate from the enemies of God, than could possibly be the duty or privilege of his ancient people. The gospel declares "whosoever will be the friend of the world, is the enemy of God." The natural and neccesary consequence of an increase of the knowledge and experience of heavenly things, must be a higher degree of holiness, and consequently a greater distance from unbelief and a greater separation from the works of darkness.

The children of God by faith in Christ are his chosen, peculiar people; and when they stand on the holy ground of gospel truth, without any falling away from their privileges, they are saved from the lusts of the flesh, from fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, and from the evils of concord with belial. In these days perhaps we cannot know what the character and position of the Church of

Christ would be, if she had always kept herself in the knowledge and love of her holy calling, and without falling therefrom, had retained that heavenly and peculiar character that would have distinguished and separated her from the world.

It is true the prophets and apostles have spoken of the exalted privileges of this "royal nation," this "peculiar people" "who sit together in heavenly places in Christ;" but as yet we do not see the children of God enjoying this blessed estate; and though it is fully and freely set before them in the gospel, they linger in the wilderness and do not enter upon it. They permit the Canaanites to dwell in the land, and worship some of their idols; adopt some of their customs, and have an interest or pleasure in retaining the friendship of the enemies of God. This being our state, we cannot enter into the possession of those things that are freely given to us of God; and though they are constantly presented for our acceptance, they do not become ours, because we do not accept them. We do not press forward and attain the things that are before, because we do not come out and separate ourselves from the things that are earthly and leave them behind. The gates of our Zion are not closed against the unlawful intrusions of the enemy, and the lovers of pleasure and friends of the world are permitted to have a place and an interest in the sacraments and institutions of the sanctuary, and those that are called Christians love to have it so.

We are not that separate and peculiar people which the word of prophecy and promise recognize and acknowledge as the children of God, under the gospel dispensation. Our obedience and devotion are not equal to our light and our privileges, and the sacred obligations resting upon us to walk as children of the light are not fulfilled. The present character and state of the Christian Church are no doubt as far from fulfilling the requisitions of the gospel, and coming up to her high and holy calling, as was the Jewish Church at the time the Saviour appeared and was rejected and crucified among them. The prophet's confession of the character and prospects of his people is strikingly descriptive of the condition of the Church in these days: Jer. 5: 25: "Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you." 26: "For among my people are found wicked men." 31: "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof? 6: 13: "For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest, every one dealeth falsely." 14: "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly; saying, peace, peace, when there is no peace." 7: 13: "And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you,

but ye answered not; therefore will I do unto this house which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh." 15: "And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim." 16: "Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me; for I will not hear thee."

It must be admitted, these warnings and reproofs are fearfully applicable to the great multitude of separate denominations called the Christian Church, and the fact that her character and prospects are herein strikingly portrayed, cannot be answered or disproved. And considering our superior advantages, and knowing we must be judged by the light and privileges of the gospel, we cannot plead that we are less wanting than that people who for ages have been an astonishment and a reproach to the world. We cannot reasonably expect that judgment will be given in our favor, because like Capernaum we are now exalted to heaven. The things that have been freely given to us of God were not given to Sodom and Gomorrah, or they might have remained until this day. And if the mighty works, and knowledge and grace of God which have been made manifest to Christendom, had been made known to the nations that sit in darkness, we know not how Christ-like and holy a people they would have been. Nor can we know how much more tolerable it may be

for them in the day of judgment, than for those who have neglected the great salvation and turned from the holy commandments delivered unto them. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The Laodicean Church believed the doctrines, and enjoyed the blessings of the gospel; and verily thought they were rich and in the favor of God, when the spirit of truth called them poor, and blind and miserable.

The Lord seeth not as man seeth. His thoughts and ways are not what blind and selfish mortals believe they are or wish them to be. But the Lord looks on the heart, and works in and with his creatures "to will and to do" whatever he commands or requires them to do, and works for them the fulfillment of whatever he has promised; or else if they refuse his counsel, and will not have him to rule in and reign over them, he casts them away from his presence and takes his Holy Spirit from them.

CHAPTER VIII.

THOUGHTS ON IDOLATRY.

Ahaz, King of Israel, in the time of his distress said, "Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them that they may help me." But they were the ruin of him and of all Israel. 2 Chron., 28 : 23.

From the beginning men have been strongly inclined to idolatry. Every people have their gods; and notwithstanding idols have no power to help, yet the multitude offer sacrifice, and seek after them as their chief good. Enlightened nations, refined by the arts and customs of civilization do not worship their gods in the same form or manner as the heathen do. Their habits of thought and action are regulated by the laws of science and the principles of intelligence, and they cannot endure the vulgar and absurd notions of heathen idolatry. An enlightened people cannot be, nor act like the heathen in any thing that can be improved or refined by the wisdom

and knowledge of men; and hence there is a vast difference in their pursuits and enjoyments. Their habitations, their food and clothing, their gods and their forms of worship are superior and far in advance of those nations that are unlearned and ignorant.

An idol is any thing that human beings love and trust in, instead of loving and trusting in the Lord their Maker. Whatever earthly thing men desire and trust in, as having power to help and do them good, is to them an idol; and accordingly they seek after and serve the gods which they believe have power to bless and make them happy. An enlightened man cannot desire or trust in a carved image, because he cannot believe it has power to bless. But if he be not a spiritual worshipper of the living and true God, he can and will seek after and trust in something else equally vain and powerless. There are, doubtless, an immense multitude that are as far from knowing the Father, and worshipping him in spirit and in truth, as they are from bowing the knee to the image of baal. The gods they serve are not the work of mens' hands, nor of ignorant, superstitious minds; but are the work of enlightened understandings and ignorant, selfish hearts.

These idols may exist in the form of riches, earthly honors or pleasures, or in anything else that claims and receives the confidence and the affection that belong to God. *Whatever divides the affections or takes away from the soul the supreme love*

of God, or prevents unlimited confidence and entire trust in him, assumes the character and takes the form of an idol, in the temple of our hearts.

The first and great commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." Herein there can be no separation of the affections from God, nor is anything allowed to divide or share in the joy of our supreme delight in him. It is written also, "Love not the world nor the things that are in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." 1 John, 2: 15–17.

Herein we learn the difference between "the holy and the profane," and know how to discern and separate between the worship and service of idols, and the worship and service of the living and true God. The things that are in the world, whatever is pleasing to the natural heart and the carnal mind; these things are sought after, and are the objects of desire and trust to them that know not the Father. The things that are above and not on the earth, things heavenly and spiritual, and not things earthly and temporal, are the treasures and the portion of those whom the Father seeketh to worship him. The children of this world will love their own things, and

worship their own idols, and the things they love and the gods they serve are earthly and sensual, and these are the fruits or works by which they shall be known.

Many bow down before "the friendship of the world," and devote all they have to secure the favors of this powerful deity. The friendship of the world is enmity with God, but how few indeed there are who renounce it altogether, and will not make any sacrifice to gain the favors of worldly friendship. Many sacrifice time, and strength, and character, to gain the blessings they trust in riches to give, and a great multitude reckon themselves unfortunate and poor, because they possess not the means of forbidden indulgence. The idol "gold," has power over thousands who love and trust in wealth, more than they love and trust in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

The pride of life obtains almost universal homage, and not only in high places, but in every place we may find costly offerings presented in honor of this potent deity. The lusts of the flesh bring into subjection, and lead captive thousands of willing servants, who seek after and trust in earthly and sensual pleasures as good things necessary for their comfort and happiness. The god of this world requires his subjects to be careful what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed; and the children of disobedience acknowledge his claims and submit to his authority.

The things of the world are sought after and considered worthy to be admired and enjoyed by all those who are not devoted lovers of the cross, and spiritual worshippers of Christ crucified.

In every place, and in all that we do, whether we work, or buy, or sell, we give some token of respect or subjection to the influence and authority of the prince of this world. We cannot build our houses, or furnish an apartment, or clothe the body, or entertain our friends, without some expression of regard and submission to the claims of our beloved idols. Our dwellings, our wardrobes, our gardens, and our good things are not considered excellent or valuable, unless there be hid in them, or visible upon them, some sign or mark of obedience and devotion to mammon. "The fashion of the world;" "the desire of the eye," or some "lust of the flesh," or the love of "vain glory," are in some way connected with all we have, and in some way acknowledged and honored in all our doings. These things are not of the Father but of the world; and those who love and trust in these lying vanities, are not obeying this command: "Come out from among them and touch not the unclean thing;" nor receiving this promise: "And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters."

If all the past and present effects of "the lusts of the flesh" and the "love of the world," were taken away from our character and from our goods, we cannot conceive in our present state, how great would

be the change. And if all our treasures which have the mark of idolatry upon them, were at once removed from us, we cannot tell how destitute and poor we should be. The amount of what would be lost, would doubtless far exceed what would be left. We have fallen away from the purity and simplicity of the first principles of the gospel; and the elements and spirit of the world, are mingled more or less with all our sacrifices.

But notwithstanding ignorant, helpless mortals choose their own ways, and set their affections on things on the earth, it cannot be possible that any creature ever found it good to violate the commands of the Creator. The things which God has forbidden his creatures to love, and the things he has forbidden them to do, cannot work for their good. Their peace and well-being consist in loving and obeying his commandments; and their ruin and misery are made perfect in disobedience. And hence, though the multitude love the things of the world, and seek after and trust in them, they do not attain nor enjoy therein the supreme good.

If rational beings had never loved nor desired the things that are sacrificed to the god of this world, and had devoted themselves with all their mind and strength to the service and worship of the living and true God, the earth would now smile in the beauty and innocence of paradise, and be like the garden of the Lord. The idols that men seek after have

not profited them, but these earthly vanities have drawn them into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which have darkened the understanding, and banished from the soul the knowledge and the love of God.

CHAPTER IX.

CHARACTER AND PRIVILEGES OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

"God is light and in him is no darkness at all." "His children are the children of light;" being renewed in his image, and "called out of darkness into his marvellous light." Christ is the light of the world, and "they that follow him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

The children of this world are called the children of darkness. They are blinded by the god of this world, and led by the spirit of the prince of darkness, until the light of the glorious gospel of Christ shines in their hearts. They walk in darkness, and cannot love and enjoy heavenly and divine things because they cannot discern or know them; and being alienated from the life of God, and having the understanding darkened, "the things of the spirit are foolishness unto them." Their employments and pursuits are according to the course of this world,

and their interests and prospects are joined with the world and with earthly things. They desire to lay up treasures on earth, not in heaven, unless they can do both at the same time; and they desire to live for this world unless while they live they can serve both God and mammon.

The children of light walk by another rule, and mind other things. The law of God being written in their hearts, and their affections set on things above, they forsake and leave behind the things of the world, and seek after and delight in the things of God. Hence, when the children of this world are created anew in Christ, and translated into the kingdom of light, they obey this command, and receive this promise: "Come out from among them and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you." This command and this promise are, and must be fulfilled and made manifest in the experience and conduct of those who become the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

The great Head of the Church has from the beginning chosen his people out of the world, and required them to be separate, having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. He has made a way for them to escape, and when his laws are written in their hearts and put in their minds, the spirit and life of his commandments will draw them to himself, and separate them from the elements of the world. To know and love God is to be diverse from the lovers of pleasure and the friends of the

world; and to love and keep his commandments is to be far from loving its pleasures or its friendship. The servants of Christ do not serve mammon, and as there is no concord between Christ and belial, so there is no agreement between the servants of the one and the servants of the other.

In former days the people of God were not permitted to be in fellowship, or to amalgamate with the wicked, but were commanded to keep themselves separate from every people that did not worship and serve the living and true God. They were joined to the Lord in an everlasting covenant, and engaged to be for him and for none else; and when they held unlawful intercourse with strangers, or united in fellowship and affection with the enemies of God, they were considered adulterers; reproved and punished for their whoredoms and idolatry. Their Maker was their husband, and when their confidence and affection were in any measure turned away from him, and they looked with desire or pleasure after strange vanities, and loved and served other gods; they forfeited the exalted privileges included in the peculiar relation they sustained to their Maker and God.

The prophet Ezra and other faithful servants of the Jewish Church were grieved and astonished when the princes came, saying, "The people of Israel have not separated themselves from the people of the land, doing according to their abominations. For they have taken of their daughters for themselves and for their sons; so that the holy seed have mingled them-

selves with the people of those lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass." And they prayed and made confession, saying, "And now, O our God, what shall we say after this, for we have forsaken thy commandments. Should we again break thy commandments and join in affinity with the people of these abominations, wouldst not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping. Behold we are before thee in our trespasses; for we cannot stand before thee because of this." Ezra, 9.

"When the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel, they came to to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, "Let us build with you, for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither." But Zerubbabel and the chief of the fathers of Israel said unto them, "Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel." Ezra, 4: 1, 2, 3. The prophet and these devoted fathers did not know or consider them the worshippers of the true God; and though they professed friendship and desired to help them, they dare not participate or join with them in any thing relating to his worship.

When the prophet and his companions were going

up to Jerusalem, he would not ask help of the king to assist him in the way, because his object was to build the temple of Jehovah and restore his worship. "Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river Ahava, that we might afflict our souls before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way; because we had spoken unto the king, saying, 'The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him.' So we fasted and besought our God for this, and he was entreated of us." Ezra, 8: 21, 22, 23. The prophet trusted in God alone, therefore did not trust in men. By fasting and prayer he sought the Lord for help, but would not ask help of the king, because he believed God would defend and prosper his own servants in their efforts to serve him, and believed his power and wrath were against all them that forsook him.

The Maker of all things needeth not the help of his enemies to establish his worship, or to protect his servants. He can do what seemeth him good for his own glory, and for the support and defence of his people without the aid of them that do not worship him in spirit and in truth. He asks not the sacrifice of wickedness, nor accepts the offerings of them that seek after and serve the gods of the land. According to the Psalmist, "He is pleased with the

sacrifices of righteousness," and "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a contrite heart." Without these, helpless, sinful creatures can bring no other than vain oblations; and without faith and repentance we cannot render acceptable service to him "who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity."

Saul no doubt intended to make an acceptable offering, when he spared the best of the sheep and oxen to sacrifice unto the Lord. But Samuel said to him, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifice as in obeying the voice of the Lord. Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he also hath rejected thee from being king over Israel." 1 Sam. 15: 22, 26. The offerings of Saul were not acceptable or pleasing to God because they were not the effect of obedience. The Lord required him to do what he had commanded to be done; and when he presented his offerings otherwise than he was commanded, his sacrifice obtained for him a curse instead of a blessing.

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the cattle upon a thousand hills; the gold and silver also belong to him; and he rules over all these things as seemeth him good. He receives not the offerings of any creature because their acknowledgments or their service can add any thing to his riches or to his essential glory; but he is pleased to accept the free-will offerings of the humble, contrite heart,

and to reward with the richest blessings the sacrifice of grateful obedience, because he loves his creatures and is pleased to make them happy.

It is necessary and profitable for the creature to serve and worship the Creator, and therefore he asks and accepts our service and our worship, as the expression and effect of our love and devotion to him. He asks and accepts our gold and silver as an evidence that all we have and are belong to him; and he requires and receives the improvement of our time and talents, as the fruit of doing whatever we do, heartily, as unto the Lord and not unto men. All we have and are *is* the Lord's, and it is not only necessary and profitable for us to render unto God the things that are his, but most desirable and blessed for us to know we are thus unreservedly consecrated to him.

Our Maker does not need these outward expressions of our devotion and love, for he always knows what is in our hearts; but we need and must have these evidences in order to know we have given ourselves to him, and that we love him more than we love all other things. The divine requisition, to present our bodies a living sacrifice, and to give all we have without reserve to God, is full of heavenly wisdom and goodness, because these outward sacrifices confirm and establish our faith that we are the Lord's, and that his purposes of grace and salvation are being fulfilled in us. Indeed we *may* know if we choose to withhold anything the Lord is

pleased to require or accept at our hands, we *must* know we are not obeying the first commandment, and cannot have the evidence that we are his. The beloved disciple said, "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

The Father of our spirits weighs the inward feelings and intentions of the heart, and knows what is in man. His commandments and his grace are adapted to our necessities, and sufficient for our salvation, and without them we cannot be saved. He requires his creatures first of all to love and serve him with their whole mind and strength. This is the first commandment; and the first requisition imposed upon every creature is, "Son give me thy heart." Here we learn the first principles of acceptable obedience, and on this altar we must lay our offerings and our sacrifices. for it is this altar that sanctifies the gift. The offering of our service and our goods to the possessor of heaven and earth, while we give him not our hearts, and refuse to obey his commandments, cannot meet his approbation or secure his blessings, for with such sacrifices God is not well pleased.

The servants of mammon and the friends of the world are not required to bring first their wealth or their influence and offer them to the Lord; but commanded first to give him their hearts, and then come and offer their gifts. "To obey is better than sac-

rifice, and without obedience and pure love, the richest offerings are too poor to be presented to the Maker of all things, who will be glorified in nothing his creatures can do while they refuse to love and trust in him. But to the wicked, God saith, "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee." Psalms, 50: 16, 17.

The lovers of pleasure may put on a form of godliness that requires much self-denial, and much sacrifice of time and money, but who hath required this at their hand. The King of saints needeth not any professions or any service from his enemies in order to promote his glory or establish his kingdom on earth. He can do all things with, or without their aid or consent. He waits not for their acknowledgments or their co-operation, and is not hindered by their objections or their resistance. The great Head of the Church with his own faithful servants can do whatever the interest of his cause demands, without depending upon the favors or friendship of wicked men.

The unfruitful works of darkness are not necessary to build up the Redeemer's kingdom, and increase the knowledge and love of God in the world. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ working in and with the children of light, is alone sufficient to accomplish this great work. It is not the strength of human instruments, but the power and wisdom of

him who employs and works with them, that makes them successful in doing what is intended to be done. There is a blessing in the cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple to one who belongs to Christ, but greater offerings without faith and love have no profit in them. The widow's two mites were of more value in the estimation of our Lord than the offerings of the rich who cast much into his treasury. The blessing of God is that which makes every thing good and profitable, and without this, earth's most precious things are poor indeed. The success and prosperity of every good work, depends on the counsel and help of God, and with these his servants can do what ought to be done, and never fail. One can chase a thousand if the Lord be for him, and ten thousand must fall before two if the Lord be against them. The faithful disciples of Jesus are well able to say to the world as Ezra said to the king: "The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him, but his power and wrath is against all them that forsake him;" and like this devoted, successful servant, be ashamed and afraid to ask or trust in the help or friendship of the "children of the wicked one." The children of God may safely trust in him alone, and without fear press onward in the way of obedience, leaving behind every thing joined to the world, and whether many be with them or many be against them, their success is of the Lord. They shall not fail because they have not the wealth or influence of wicked men on their side; but if they fail it is be-

cause they are not on the Lord's side, and because the help of his Spirit is not with them. It is more safe to be joined to the Lord and lose the favor and friendship of men, than it is to be joined to the world and forget the favor and blessing of God.

There is a wall of separation which the Lord himself has established between the things of the world, and the things he hath chosen out of the world and sanctified to himself. Infidelity will not acknowledge this distinction; and the servants of mammon will if possible, annihilate the difference between the holy and profane, and make all things common. But this separation exists, notwithstanding many professing godliness are determined to make it void, and to maintain concord between Christ and belial. But "the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself;" and this consecration to God and separation from the world, is plainly declared and positively enjoined in both the Old and New Testaments.

The prophet Ezekiel heard in vision the God of Israel speaking to him and declaring his holy displeasure against the people for this, "In their setting of their threshold by my thresholds, and their post by my posts, and the wall between me and them, they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations which they have committed." 43: 8. And the same prophet said: "Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things: They have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the un-

clean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. 22: 26.

The Lord's inheritance, his Church and people on earth, are chosen out of the world, and are called, "a holy nation, a peculiar people, that they should shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light." In their baptismal vows they solemnly "promise to renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, and no more follow or be led by them." They are set apart and consecrated to the service of God, being renewed in the spirit of their minds, and no more conformed to the world. According to the Psalmist, "Him that is godly the Lord hath set apart for himself;" and they that are godly will live for God and not for themselves nor for the world. They have nothing to do with idols, and are no more reckoned among the unholy and unclean. Their character and conduct are a visible expression of the beauty and excellency of Christianity, and their life and conversation confess and make manifest the difference between the holy and profane. The things given to them they return to God, and their employments and treasures are no more their own, but are dedicated to him whose they are and whom they serve.

The children of God were not called or required to be more holy and more separate from the works

of darkness under a former dispensation, than they are under the brighter and more perfect dispensation of the gospel. But according to the increase of "grace and truth" which "came by Jesus Christ," they are required to be more distinct and free from the elements of the world, and from the spirit that works in the hearts of the children of disobedience, than they were or could be, before the light of the glorious gospel shone upon them. In former days when the visible Church adopted the customs, or formed matrimonial connections, or trusted in the assistance of strangers, or departed from her own laws and worship, she was forsaken of God, and left to perish by the hand of her enemies unless she quickly repented, and came back to her own peculiar privileges.

In all ages, the obligations and immunities of the people of God are distinctly and entirely their own. Their calling, their character, and their prospects are indeed peculiar, and these peculiarities distinguish, and separate them from all other people. The east is not separated farther from the west, than the children of light are separated from the children of darkness. This distinction has no reference to time or place, but the nature of the change which effects this separation is implied and expressed in the words, "born again;" "created anew in Christ;" "dead to the world and alive to God." Herein are contained the elements of the wall of separation that divide

the heavenly from the earthly, and describes the difference between that which belongs to the world, and that which is chosen out of it.

The Lord's people, or his children on earth, are one body, from the beginning to the end of time. The members of this heavenly family are "builded together for a habitation of God through the spirit," and these compose one holy temple, the dwelling place and pleasant portion of our Lord. "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." Here is no room for idols; no place for concord with belial, nor even a place for "friendship with the world." Those whom God accepts and sanctifies to himself, are called to be diligent and faithful in his service; and these being "set apart" and devoted to him, may no more be employed in any sinful work.

It is not a form of godliness or a name among the Church records that constitutes a "living stone" in the spiritual building. It is being renewed in knowledge and true holiness, being crucified to the world and made alive in Christ, that unites the soul to God, and prepares it for the dwelling place of his Holy Spirit. These are they who grow up into Christ in all things; who walk in love, and are followers of God as dear children. The servants of the great King in all their intercourse with the world have one leading object in view; and the one great work before them is to convert sinners from the error of their ways, and fill the world with the knowl-

edge and love of God. This labor of love engages their affections and inspires their prayers, and in the prosecution of this work they are accepted of God and divinely assisted, when they trust alone in the help of the spirit of truth. They are not required nor permitted to seek the friendship or the co-operation of wicked men in doing the work of the Lord, They can do all the great Master requires without the aid of those who love the service of another Master; and the cause of truth will not suffer because the servants of mammon do not lend their aid.

Those that walk in darkness and love not God, cannot sincerely desire to glorify him. They are not enlightened to discern the excellence of heavenly things, and hence cannot truly love them. They may love many things connected with the service of God, and may love to have an interest in whatever relates to his worship; but they love these things because it is prudent and honorable to do so, or because they apprehend that in some way their own earthly or selfish interests may be promoted thereby. No man can serve two masters, neither can it be possible that any man truly intends or desires to work against the master to whom he yields himself servant to obey. The children of the wicked one are their own master's servants, and until they renounce the devil and all his works, they cannot be the servants of God, nor can they sincerely desire to fill the world with his glory and his truth. Accordingly, it cannot be wise or harmless for the servants of Is-

rael's King, to desire the co-operation or seek the money or friendship of the children of the world, to assist them in destroying the works of darkness. The servants of mammon cannot afford to build up the Redeemer's kingdom, while they are engaged in the defence of their own; and the servants of Christ cannot afford to buy their co-operation, because it is better that they be engaged against them than with them. The church of Christ—the pillar and ground of the truth, can and must stand and flourish without aid from beneath. If it cannot prevail without help from the kingdom of darkness, then has it already fallen and been given into the hand of the enemy.

There may be some appearance of plausibility in the argument that the money and influence of wicked men, when brought into the service of the church, are made subservient to the interests of true religion, and the glory of God promoted thereby. It is true the wealth and friendship of the world, and all things else are made to glorify God and to work for good to them that love him. But the reason why these things work for good, is not because the children of God seek after or trust in them; and indeed they do not work for good only to them that have no confidence therein, and no fellowship with them. They work for good because the Lord reigns and rules over all things so as to promote his own glory and the best interests of them that obey him. The Psalmist said, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee,

the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain;" but from this we cannot infer that Christians may desire or accumulate wrath; neither can we safely believe they may seek the wealth or friendship of wicked men, in order to praise God therewith.

The question may be suggested, Shall the unconverted world be forsaken, and shall the servants of Christ refuse the offerings of them who desire to participate with them in the service of God? Shall they forbid or refuse to invite their neighbors who are yet in their sins, to unite with them in worship, and join in the duties and ceremonies of our holy religion?

No man may cast a stumbling block in the way of another, or do any thing to hinder the sinner from coming to Christ. It were better the child of God should lose his right hand or even his life, than that he should refuse to love and do good by all means to every soul for whom Christ died. But in loving and doing good to all men, the servants of God are not required to bring their wealth or their influence into his treasury, but commanded to win souls, and convert sinners from the error of their ways; and when the heart is gained, and the love of God shed abroad there, there is no occasion to beg their money or their service, because they have now learned all they have and are is the Lord's, and with a cheerful heart they will render to him that which is his.

The Lord's offerings, or the gifts that he accepts and rewards are the expressions of humble obedi-

ence and grateful acknowledgment. When his ancient people were about to build the Sanctuary, great and expensive preparations were necessary. Costly and precious materials must be collected, and much gold and silver used in the work. But in order to accomplish this, the Lord required and accepted only the free-will offerings of them that gave willingly with their heart. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto the children of Israel that they bring me an offering; of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye shall take my offering. And let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." Exod., 25: 2, 8. The Lord himself gave particular directions how to build this place of worship, and in doing this great work he commanded them to take the offerings that were given willingly with the heart. The devotion and sacrifice of the heart were first required in order to prepare a place where he might dwell among them. And while the building of the Sanctuary was going on, and the people were bringing their offerings, they spake unto Moses saying, "The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which the Lord commanded to make." "And Moses caused it to be proclaimed," "Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the Sanctuary: So the people were restrained from bringing; For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it and too much." Exod., 35: 5, 6, 7.

The Lord loveth a cheerful giver, and those that

love God will give cheerfully and freely whenever they believe his kingdom and glory are being advanced thereby. The great Head of the church, and the Father of his people never requires his children to offer more than they are able to give; but according to their ability he is pleased to accept and bless their thank-offerings. He does not require them to owe any man any thing, for his sake; but to deal justly, love mercy and walk humbly before him all their days. When his people build a "Sanctuary that he may dwell among them, let them take the offerings that are given, willingly with the heart," and if need be, let the people be "restrained from bringing," but let them not be compelled or urged to bring more than they love to give. Let willing obedience and pure love present every offering that is given to God, and then he will accept and sanctify the gift. "With such sacrifices God is well pleased;" and with such offerings let his people build every Sanctuary, and with such offerings let them do every thing else they do for his glory, and God will dwell among them. He will dwell in their midst, and the symbol of his presence shall not be "in the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night;" but the real manifestation of his presence and glory shall abide in their hearts, and rest upon their Sanctuary forevermore.

The children of God must stand and build on the foundation prepared for them, otherwise their house must fall. They must live, not by the aid and friendship of wicked men; but by every word that pro-

ceedeth out of the mouth of God. Herein is their only and all-sufficient strength. Their laws, their worship, their principles of thought and action, originate in, and come from the holy word and spirit of God; and when they live according to this word, they walk in the light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in them. The world may, if they will receive their opinions, and seek their friendship, because these are the light and salt of the earth; but these may not mingle with, nor consent to be subject to the spirit of the world. They are called to "come up higher," and chosen to stand on holier ground, and their place in Christ Jesus separates them from idols and from things unclean. Their holy calling, their christian character, the requisitions of the gospel, and the exceeding great and precious promises all forbid that the children of the Holy One should be in bondage to the elements of the world, or in friendship with the enemies of God. They are required to come out and be separate, and maintain the holy character and occupy the heavenly place prepared for them. How excellent; O, how divinely excellent are the things that are freely given to us of God. They are indeed sufficient to deliver us from evil, and to make us that blessed people whose God is the Lord; and when those who name the name of Christ, know and accept these things, and have no more fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness "their light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon them."

CHAPTER X.

Personal Experience—Desolation of Heart—Spiritual desertion.

How impotent and blind is my poor soul. How many and pressing are my wants, and how vain is the help of man. If a thousand were waiting to do for me all that human wisdom can do, their help would be vain. They could not relieve my necessities, they could not even understand them. The best they could do, would be to leave me alone with my God. I am alone with thee, O Lord, for who beside thee is acquainted with my desolate heart. To whom can I speak but unto thee, for none beside thee can know my thoughts or return answers to my pressing inquiries. When thou dost not answer and hold me up, the spirit faints within me; and if thou cease to comfort and nourish the soul with thy inspiring presence, I cannot endure the gloom of the lonely wilderness through which I am wandering.

For a long time hunger and thirst have preyed upon the soul, and no living spring or fruitful field appears within reach of my feeble steps. Desolate and alone I wander on without knowing whither I go. It seems as though all I am able to know, and all I am able to do, is to "have faith in God." Help must come from above, but what manner of help, or by what means deliverance will come, none can tell. "Clouds and darkness are round about him with whom we have to do." The Lord reigns and is doing his own pleasure with his creatures, but it does not yet appear what is being done. The day will declare it, and bring to light the things that are not yet made manifest.

The Prophets and Apostles teach the truth; but their words are dark and powerless, only as they are read with the spirit that inspired them. The mind of Christ alone, can apprehend the meaning of the words of inspiration. O my soul wait thou only upon God; wait and watch and pray, for of him cometh thy salvation. Canst thou not watch one hour, a moment, a little season, and all will be over. The darkness will pass away, and the true light shine forever. If I knew myself and all things else as they are, I should even now desire only such things as are now given me, and should anticipate and cheerfully accept whatever is now being done. But my folly and ignorance are so great, I often anticipate and desire many things I may not have, and am often perplexed and cast down, on account of many

things that come to pass. Herein I learn how foolish my wisdom is, and learn also the imperfection of human knowledge. Among the daily changes of life, many events take place, that my wisdom would not permit, were it given me to know or determine what shall be on the morrow. I am too blind to choose what my inward or outward state should be, and cannot comprehend the reasons or the effects of the divine government, in relation to myself or others. O my soul, cease to know or be wise for thyself, and henceforth adore and trust only in the wisdom of God.

The things that are seen and heard—the things that are suffered and enjoyed—our duties and our privileges—all these are full of meaning, and are intended to make us know the things that belong to our peace. They explain and enforce the requisitions of divine truth, and teach the simple and patient what they most need to know. O Lord do thou teach us how to learn of thee, and not of another; and learn us to desire only thy will and to approve all thy conduct over us; then we shall be wise in thy wisdom, and happy in thy love. The Lord is good to them that trust in him, and they shall not be overcome. O my soul, let the world have its own, and leave the care of all its concerns with them that have their portion in this life; but let me attend to the instructions of true wisdom, and yield myself to receive and enjoy only the things of God.

If I will yet love some earthly things, and desire to hold as my own any thing but poverty, humiliation and the cross; then it is most profitable for me to be tried and afflicted, until I learn to suffer the loss of all things. When all is lost, I shall suffer loss no more. Now my soul, do violence to thyself; put on strength not thine own, and from henceforth "render unto Cæzar the things that are Cæzar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Love not, nor hold in thy heart, that which bears the image of Cæzar, but render unto God perfect love, and willing obedience. Truly I am too weak and ignorant to endure the loss of many things; but the Lord knoweth how to temper the wind to the shorn lamb, and he will never let one that trusts in him fall by the hand of the enemy. Though my wisdom is too imperfect to know the way that he takes, and my strength too small to stand in the evil day, yet I know his grace is sufficient. And he will fulfill his word and perform his pleasure, in the perfect salvation of them that wait upon him, and in the end they shall know "he hath done all things well."

GLOOMY STATE AND PROSPECTS OF THE CHURCH.

In these days of darkness and peril, who is able to stand and speak the whole truth; or who is able to entreat for Zion and show her any good. Her present spiritual state and prospects, seem to be very much as they were in former days, when it was said by the prophet, "Thus have they loved to wander,

they have not refrained their feet, therefore the Lord doth not accept them; he will now remember their iniquity and visit their sins. Then said the Lord unto me, "Pray not for this people for their good. When they fast I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them; but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence."—Jer. 14: 10, 12. Also the words of the prophet Ezekiel, seem to be fearfully applicable to the people of God in these days; "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face; should I be inquired of at all by them? Therefore speak unto them, and say, Thus saith the Lord God; every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the Lord will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols." Ezek. 14: 3, 4.

In these days a multitude of teachers apprehend no special cause of alarm in the present condition of the professed people of God. They consider the character and prospects of the christian Church generally in a flourishing state. Therefore they prophecy smooth things, and cry peace, peace, and the multitude that hear, believe their report, and are at ease in Zion.

There are indeed none among us that seek after graven images, or that bow down before idols made

with hands. In this sense as a Church and people we are free from idolatry: but "if we love the things of the world," and "have fellowship with the works of darkness," or "have pleasure in unrighteousness," "we have put the stumbling-block of our iniquity before our face, and have set up idols in our hearts." If we have not "come out from among them, nor touched not the unclean thing," we are not received and acknowledged, as the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

Our Maker and our Judge is forever the same unchangeable Being. The principles of his righteous moral government never change; therefore the same measure of guilt will always receive the same measure of punishment. If his people have departed from his commandments, they stand exposed and condemned according to their delinquencies. It is required of every creature according to that he hath, and in this just and perfect balance every creature must be weighed. In former days, no people were favored with that measure of grace which has been manifest since the christian era; and if the christian Church has not improved her superior privileges, her danger and condemnation must be equal to the non-improvement of the talents she has buried under the gospel.

Doubtless the grace herein presented to every believer in Christ, is sufficient to make them pure in heart, and unspotted from the world. And because the great sacrifice has been offered for this purpose,

and all things are ready, every one that names the name of Christ, are called and imperatively required to experience and enjoy this blessed state. But now our Zion is not so Her faith and holiness do not separate and distinguish her from the world; but her unbelief and unfaithfulness separate her from the blessings and heavenly places prepared for her. She has wandered from her duties, her privileges and her God; and like ancient Israel she has forsaken his covenant and joined in harmony with the world. Pride and luxury and idleness are invited into the sanctuary, and her holy places are exposed and often polluted by unholy intruders. Her Maker is no more her husband, for she has left her first love, and desired and enjoyed that which is enmity with God. On her forehead her name and character are written, and what can she do in the day when her plagues come, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE—SELF-EXAMINATION, &C.

O my soul enter thou into thy closet, and in silence learn what truth and conscience will teach thee there. Hide thee in the secret place, and inquire diligently to know where and what thou art. It is thy business here to learn thy duty and thy destiny, that thou mayest prepare thyself for both. And who can answer thy inquiries or make thee know

thyself, but Him that seeth in secret and knoweth all things. Art thou never overcharged with surfeiting, or cares of this life; but temperate and sober, and free from every foolish and hurtful lust? Art thou free indeed, and careful for nothing but to please God and keep his commandments? Are thy affections set on things above, and free from the things of earth? And art thou now able to answer, yea Lord thou knowest I am free from all these entanglements; and that every earthly and selfish desire is renounced and overcome? Thou knowest I am careful for nothing, but to watch and pray, and instantly do thy will. Thou knowest I am led by the spirit of truth, not by my own spirit, nor the spirit of the world: and thou knowest I receive with thankfulness every expression of thy will whether I be comforted or afflicted thereby.

O my soul, these are thy plain simple duties, and these are the things that belong to thy peace; but, O Lord, thou knowest if I had been faithful from infancy till this time, I should now only just be able to meet the spirit of thy commandments, and walk in the truth as I ought to do. And now what can I say, or how shall conscience answer for me, when I know I have failed in every point, and every part of my past life is a witness against me. O Lord, unto me belongeth shame and confusion of face as it is this day; but thou art good and ready to forgive, and it is thy province always to have mercy; were it not so, I should not have lived to know these

things, nor be permitted to make this confession before thee. O my soul, the spirit of grace and truth is ever ready to help, and there is yet time to be saved from thy sins. Be still and wait upon God; thy restless, selfish efforts cannot hasten the work, therefore be still, and the Lord himself will bring thee into subjection, and work in thee the fulfillment of his promises, and the answer of thy prayers. Be in haste to humble thyself, and be quick to forsake thy sins and to turn away from every vain thought and selfish desire.

These be they that separate thee from him whom thou lovest, and hinder thee from coming to him in whose presence there is fullness of joy. Thou mayest live in his presence, and have continual communion with him, when he has thoroughly purged away thy sins and made thee pure from all thy defilement. Be still then, O my soul, and die to every influence but the quenching power of the holy spirit of truth. Think not of thyself to do any thing, and know that of thyself thou hast never done any good. Watch and pray that thou desire not nor accept any honor or praise on account of what the Lord has wrought in thee or done by thee. And never forget nor cease to know, thou art an unprofitable servant, when thou hast done all thou art able to do. Thou hast nothing to do for thyself, thy only work is to do the will of him who brought thee into the world for his own service and glory. If thou labor for thyself, it can profit thee nothing, for thou art daily sustained and

preserved alive by his care and providence, not thine own. Without heavenly wisdom thou canst never know what to do; and nothing thou canst do will work for thy good, unless the Lord direct and bless thy labors. O my soul, fear God, and give glory to him, and know that he rules over thee and over all things, and doeth all things well.

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me; hope thou in God for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God." In all life's weary journey of thirty and eight years, I have never been more weak and destitute, nor more unable to go onward without immediate help from above, than in these days. If I say I will be wise, folly is with me. If I resolve to be strong and patiently endure, my strength is weakness and my unassisted efforts leave me helpless.

I see and approve what is excellent, and the good and right way appears plain and easy, and yet stumble and fall in every effort to walk therein.—The path of obedience shines brighter and brighter, and a purer light marks the road that leads to heaven. But my slow unequal progress, and oft repeated deviations, are also more and more manifest. The light that reveals the beauty of holiness, exposes also the deformity and exceeding sinfulness of sin, and compels me to know and confess myself more and more vile. Truly my wisdom is folly, my righteousness sinful. And though I know this, and know

that all I am is perverse; yet I am pained and afflicted when self is being crucified, and earthly affections of soul are exposed to be consumed by the spirit of truth.

These fearful apprehensions, and self-accusing suggestions, rise in the mind and burden the conscience, because self still lives, and resists the operations of divine grace, which work mightily in the soul, to destroy whatever is earthly and selfish there. Because my prayer is heard and being answered in the destruction of the life of self, my soul is cast down and disquieted. I seem unwilling to be separated from an enemy I have loved and cherished so long; and were it not so that my Redeemer is engaged for me, I could not endure to the end of the conflict. But I know in whom I have believed, and with his grace assisting will be a co-worker with him in abasing and humbling myself, until faith gains the victory. I will learn the science of warfare against the unholy desires and affections of my own heart, and contend earnestly to bring every thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ.

In warring against the notions and claims of self, *faith* and *self-denial* are my strong helpers, and these must be with me in every engagement. My own wisdom or inclinations may not direct me in the way, nor prepare my defence; for the Captain of my salvation will not leave me to choose the conditions of the battle in a conflict so fearful and decisive. I must therefore take the whole armour of

God, and choose no other defence than that which the spirit and power of truth prepares for me.—Whatever takes place within or around about me, will work for my good, if I am striving lawfully to overcome; and whatever comes to pass will work against me, if I am contending for any other victory than the destruction of the life of self, and the possession of the mind and spirit of Christ. And herein I must examine carefully and pray instantly, else I shall most surely turn the battle against myself and fight for the enemy. But grace is sufficient, and if I will only stand firm, and not strive against my own cause, every cruel device and fiery dart will fall upon the foe, and I shall not be injured, but greatly strengthened thereby.

SCIENCE OF WARFARE.

The way and means by which the great victory is gained are not carnal, if they were so, the warfare would be most natural and easy; but in this conflict grace is against nature; and the whole strength of self is opposed to the victory. And for this reason, because self-denial and the cross stand all along in the way of life, few there be that find it, and fewer still there be that reach the prize at last. O my soul, canst thou persevere in such a warfare as this, and always strive successfully to overcome thyself. Canst thou take up the cross and bear it after Jesus, and consent to be like him, "who was tempted in all points like as we are yet without sin." The instru-

ments and agencies that afflict and alarm thee, are not thy foes, but thy helpers; therefore resist not these, but work with them, and the strong man will soon be subdued. When thou art smitten on one cheek, turn the other, and thou has gained some advantage. When thou art compelled to suffer for well doing, take it patiently and the enemy sustains a loss. When reviled or censured for what is good and right, complain not, but give in return thy prayers, and thy blessings, and thou hast gained a victory. When thy character and thy goods are taken from thee, ask them not again; but consent to be poor and of no reputation, and thou hast secured the true riches, and laid up treasure in heaven. When the honors and enjoyments of the world come before thee, renounce them instantly, and prefer before these the favor of God and the cross of Christ; and perfect victory with eternal glory is thy sure reward.

These are some of the conditions of the battle, and in this manner the weapons of this warfare must be exercised in order to overcome. The battle is the Lord's, but if we are co-workers with him the victory will be ours. O my soul, if the Captain of thy salvation required thee to expose and condemn thy neighbor—to reprove and correct a brother—and resist and destroy thine enemy; it would be natural and easy to contend in this manner; but to deny self—strive against all its claims—search out—expose and counteract all its secret motions—how slow

and unwilling to be faithful in such a contest as this. When self must yield, canst thou be a ready co-worker in gaining the victory; and is it joy to thee when self is overcome and compelled to surrender all, and take the lowest place?

True, indeed, thou art even now, only able to begin to learn the science of warfare; when wilt thou be ready and prepared to engage in active efficient service. Thy Captain has led thee thus far, and thy feet stand on elevated ground, where thou art able to see and examine the secret movements of the enemy. Thou art brought to this place to learn the devices of the common foe, and to be armed and prepared for the conflict. Thy weapons will be given thee, and be thou careful and determined, that no selfish or carnal instrument be found in thy hand. Be clothed with humility; let the poor body and soul, both be covered with this priceless robe, which costs thee nothing but to put it on. Thy garments must be always white and unspotted from the world —free from the appearance of any thing that looks like pride, or outward adorning; otherwise they will rather expose than defend. The enemy is skillful to discern the least visible stain, and is ever ready and able most effectually to aim a blow at his own mark. Thy love must be pure and perfect, sufficient to bear and lose all things without losing itself. Thy faith must be the substance of things hoped for— strong and active, and able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Being thus armed and prepared for the conflict, watch and pray without ceasing, and thy defence is sure. "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord," and all power is in his hands who hath said, "be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."—"Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name, for he hath dealt bountifully with me.

THE CLAY IN THE HAND OF THE POTTER—REFLECTIONS.

"Then I went down to the potter's house, and behold he wrought a work on the wheels And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, O house of Israel cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold as the clay is in the potter's hand so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel." Jer. 18: 4, 6.

The clay is in thy hand, O Lord, and thou wilt turn it upon the wheel, until thou hast wrought such a vessel as seemeth good to thee to make; may it be fashioned according to thy pleasure—be made fit for thy service, and have a place in thy temple forever. Let the clay be turned again and again, and let not the will of the creature have any influence in forming the vessel; but may grace and truth make the work perfect, that the power and glory of the

Potter may appear, and his own work praise him evermore. O my soul, how passive the clay must be upon the wheel—how yielding—how ready to receive every divine impression. No earthly or selfish motive may operate upon the soul that is being renewed in the divine image; but the spirit of truth must inspire and govern all its movements. None but the Potter may have power over the clay, otherwise the vessel is marred in his hand, and is good for nothing.

The thoughts and ways of the Father of our spirits, in relation to his creatures are above our comprehension; only we may know this; as he is holy and perfect, so he will make every creature like himself, that does not frustrate his grace and resist his will. Hence it is our wisdom to cease from our own works, and let him do as seemeth him good with his own. No creature can be wise for himself, and whenever wisdom or excellence appear in the character or conduct of human beings, it is only an expression of the power of the Potter over the clay. The will and wisdom of the creature must cease to operate upon himself, and the soul submit to God, before it can be renewed in knowledge and true holiness.

It is blessed indeed to be kept always in the love of God; separate and free from the influence of those natural and accidental changes, which so often grieve the spirit of truth, and interrupt and deform his own beautiful work. When the soul lies passive

before God, every change and every circumstance in life are profitable, and serve only to purify and adorn it. No event, whatever its nature may be, is lost or useless; but all things are designed and directed to operate favorably, and to increase the safety and blessedness of the soul that waits only upon God.

The holy life and character of our blessed Lord, are a faithful example, and perfect exhibition of the clay in the hand of the potter. His confidence in God was unlimited—his submission and obedience unreserved and perfect. He came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. In all things he submitted himself to him that judgeth righteously, and said, "I can of mine own self do nothing." Our Lord became poor, and made himself of no reputation. He was hungry, and thirsty, and weary in his labors; and when the dark, damp shades of night gathered round him, he had not where to lay his head. He saw his goods appropriated to sinful purposes, and wasted in luxury and extravagance, and yet complained not, neither did he withhold his blessings. He went about doing good, and gave himself for them that hated him, and would not believe nor acknowledge themselves indebted to him.

Here we behold a visible exhibition of the clay in the hand of the potter; and in this blessed example of pure love and perfect obedience, the vessel was not marred in the potter's hand; but was made perfect through temptations and sufferings, and afterward

received up into glory. O my soul, canst thou go and do likewise? Canst thou consent to be poor and of no reputation, and give thy labors to the unthankful and the evil? Canst thou impart thy goods and give thy prayers to them that would injure thee, and that waste and abuse thy favors? Thy great Exemplar could do this. He withheld not his richest blessings; neither did he withhold his face from spitting, or his back from stripes; but in all things suffered willingly and patiently, that we might be reconciled to God and saved from suffering. Art thou able and worthy to follow him, and be as he was in this world? Then thou mayest glory in thy discipleship, and call Jesus thy Pattern and Guide; and then thou canst say, "as the clay is in the hand of the potter, so am I in thy hand, O Lord."

CHAPTER XI.

A Law of the Divine Government—Universality of this Law—Men the Arbiters of their own Destiny—Testimony of the Word of God—Desires and Intentions of the Heart, determine the Character of the outward Conduct—Effects belong to God—Love of God in the Heart the procuring Cause of all good Works.

THE MEASURE WE METE, MEASURED TO US AGAIN.

"With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again." This principle or law of the divine government extends through every part of the administration. Every character and every condition in human life, are affected by this general law, and subject to its limitations. There are no evasions or exceptions that can annihilate or avoid the application of this principle.

The Creator of mind, and the great Legislator and Judge of human beings, has declared this rule of the

divine government, that men may know they are themselves the arbiters of their own destiny. What they do, shall be done to them again; and the dispensations of nature and of grace shall work for them nothing more nor less than the fruit of their own doings. We are ever receiving from the hand of our Maker and Judge, according to the nature and intention of our conduct toward him and his creatures. It is written "forgive and ye shall be forgiven; and if ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your heavenly Father forgive you;" and also "to the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful;" and "with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again."

We should however understand, that the visible expression or outward manner, is not the standard by which actions are weighed. But the hidden motive or secret desire of the heart is that which determines the nature and value of our conduct. We cannot indeed know or decide whether others will be benefitted or injured by what we do; because the Governor of human beings holds in his own hands the consequences and results of our conduct. Sometimes when we intend to do good, evil results follow; and sometimes when evil is intended, good is the result. But though we know not how others will receive or be affected by what we intend to do for them; we *may* know the same measure of good we desire and resolve to do, shall be measured to us again, however others may be affected thereby. The good that is done to others through the influence of

our doings, is not of us, but is of Him who works with good or evil actions of his creatures, such results as his own infinite wisdom sees best.

In order to be useful and enjoy the fruit of our doings we must first be reconciled to God, and receive his love shed abroad in the heart; and then be constrained by the power of this love to help such as need help, and as we have opportunity do good to all men. The good that is done in the earth the Lord doeth it, and those who act in harmony with his will and are co-workers with him, receive again the same measure of good which they desire and consent to mete to others. The Lord accepts and rewards their upright intentions and sincere endeavors to benefit his creatures as if all were done to himself, and the same as though they accomplished all the good intended. But without Christ in the heart, and unreconciled to God, the good that may result from our labors is far from us. It is done by him who works with our actions such results as seemeth him good; and however great and blessed may be the effects that follow our doings, we have no part nor lot in the matter if our hearts are not right with God. The reward of well doing, and the good done, belong only to those unto whom divine providence will apply them.

Pleasant words are empty and deceptive to him who utters them, and benevolent actions are deficient and unfruitful to him who performs them, unless they flow from the love of God shed abroad in the heart. Without the presence of this heavenly prin-

ciple to enlighten the understanding and purify the affections, we cannot know nor intend to mete to others, what we desire to receive from the hand of our Judge; and without the help of the spirit of truth, we are unable to do any thing that shall not make us ashamed when we receive the same measure again, and eat the ripe fruit of our doings. The principle of divine goodness must dwell in the heart, in order that good desires and right intentions flow out of it. We may deceive ourselves in this matter, but we cannot deceive our Maker in whose sight the outward appearance of good works, without this inward principle, avails nothing; and who will measure to every creature according to the true character of his own motives and doings.

We ask amiss, and our prayer is vain, if we consent not, nor desire to do unto others what we pray should be done to us. Our iniquities testify against us, and our sins are not blotted out, if we from our hearts forgive not every one their trespasses against us. The desires and intentions of the heart are not more availing when directed in prayer to God, than when they are expressed in our conduct toward his creatures. The heart is always naked and open before him, and he will as surely do unto us what we desire and resolve to do to his creatures, as he will do unto us what we pray him to do. The law and the gospel declare this precept, and enforce this command: "As ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." And the only just and wise Disposer of human contingencies over-rules all

things in such a manner that every creature shall receive no other than the same measure he has himself measured. It is an original and natural propensity of the human soul to desire the greatest amount of good we are capable of enjoying; and we would that every creature should do unto us that which will fulfill this desire. According to this measure we should therefore regulate our conduct toward others, and desire and labor to procure for every creature this same amount of good.

Love is the fulfilling of the law, and love worketh no ill to his neighbor, but labors to secure the well-being of every creature. When the heart loves to do unto others what we desire to receive again, the law is fulfilled, and the promises which comprehend all good, are yea and amen to us; the fulfilment of the promises being the fruit or measure of obedience to the law of love. Pure love is simple in its operations and separate from any other principle of action. When combined with any thing earthly or selfish, it ceases to be pure, and contains within itself an element that destroys the good it promises to do. An earthly, selfish heart, may perform generous actions —acknowledge the purest doctrines, and express humility and affection in the outward manner, and yet be destitute of the principle of pure love. Self-respect may compel us to avoid the appearance of every unfashionable vice. The love of influence, or the desire for the esteem of others may produce a well ordered life and blameless conversation; but these motives are deceptive and impure, and the ef-

forts and actions that flow from them are destitute of the savor of life and the fruits of righteousness. The pious Kempis said, "The outward work, without charity profiteth nothing; but whatsoever is done out of charity, be it ever so little or contemptible in the sight of men, is wholly fruitful; for God weigheth more with how much love one worketh, than how much he doeth."

Love is of God. The natural heart cannot originate or produce this heavenly plant, which lives and flourishes only where Christ reigns. Because love is of God and not of us, where love is, there is power, and truth, and life. It does not live without action, and does not act without increasing and extending itself. If the object be not gained, yet is the labor profitable and the reward sure. Love works not for profit or reward, yet great gain is always the certain result of every labor of love. It is diffusive in its nature and quiet in its operations, but strong and mighty to overcome great moral evils. It will prevail and gain the victory when argument and authority are vain and useless. How much labor and anxious thought have been wasted in vain attempts to reform the character and regulate the conduct of men, when the presence and power of this principle would have accomplished the work in the easiest and most effectual manner. The mountain will sink down and the rough places become smooth under its melting, transforming influence.

The proposition that "knowledge is power," and also "money is power," is not more true than the

assertion that love is power. Intellectual and moral strength are involved in this principle, and cannot be separated from it. The supreme excellence and value of pure love consists in its efficiency to do good, and to do nothing else but good; to produce holiness and happiness, and prevent wickedness and misery. The power of knowledge is wise to do evil; the power of wealth is adapted to corrupt and destroy; and the power of force is strong to do hurt. And indeed, where the divine principle of love does not regulate and bring into subjection the strength of intellect, of authority, and of every mental effort their power is to do evil and only evil continually. Truth and goodness are inherent properties of love, and as they naturally and necessarily flow out of it, they seem to pervade the moral atmosphere and diffuse around the centre from which they emenate, their own peculiar element which transforms or consumes whatever resists its influence, and which attracts and draws within itself whatever is capable of receiving truth and happiness. Who can do good, or mete to others the measure they are willing to receive again, that knows not nor feels the quickening influence of this divine energy. Is there any wisdom that can lead the understanding but the wisdom of love? or any force that can win the affections but the force of love? or any authority that can govern the will but the authority of love? Wherever the power of intellect; of authority, or force are employed, and love is not there, the affections and the will naturally assume a defensive position, and in-

crease their strength of defence in the same measure as they are assailed by any other power than the power of love.

The great King of heaven and earth came into the world to subdue the world, and to bring all resistance and all authority into subjection to himself. Infinite wisdom and strength were in his possession, but the only means he employed to overcome evil and establish the dominion of righteousness and peace, were the wisdom and strength of love. He did not claim obedience by the strength of argument or the voice of authority; he did not enforce subjection with the sword, nor by the arm of civil law; nor did he take the attractions and splendor of wealth to allure the multitude to follow him. But he went about doing good—healing all manner of sickness and disease among the people, teaching them the things that belong to their peace, and persuading them to repent of their sins, and avoid the miseries that were coming upon them. He resented no personal injury; he met the insults, the false testimony, and the cruel scourging of them that hated him and condemned him to be guilty of death, with no other defence than meek *submission*, *faith* and *love*. Our Lord and Saviour came into the world that we might know him and be like him. He is the author of all wisdom and the possessor of supreme power; and his holy character and conduct are a living and visible exhibition of the way and means to do good and overcome evil. An eternal precedent is hereby established, and no creature can add thereto or dimin-

ish therefrom; and from hence we learn that the children and servants of the great King, can serve God and work righteousness by no other than the same means their great Master employed. As he could do good, so they can do good; as he overcame, even so shall they overcome; and if they fail in following his example, and in using the means he used, there can be no other way in which they may even hope to succeed. Our great Exemplar and Judge ascended up where he was before, and left for us his commands and his example, that in keeping them we might come where he is and behold his glory, and reign with him forever.

The pure benevolence and the perfect wisdom of the Friend and Saviour of sinners are embodied in this principle of the divine government: "With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again;" and herein are involved the strongest motives that can operate on the minds of imperfect moral beings to constrain them to love one another with a pure heart fervently, and persuade them to do all possible good to every creature. And herein also, are contained the strongest reasons that finite minds can appreciate, to restrain them from desiring or doing any thing that would hurt or destroy any creature. To desire or intend injury to another whether it be effected or not, is to secure injury to ourselves; or intentionally to withhold from, or prevent another from receiving any good we might do, is to make ourselves suffer equal loss.

Who can comprehend how merciful and just, and

how good and profitable this holy requisition: "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you." The inherent goodness and superlative excellence of this divine command shine with so much brilliancy, that even the most ignorant and selfish are compelled to acknowledge and approve its claims, even though they hate the duty it enjoins. If we love this precept and keep these words, we may do what we will, and our doings shall work for our good; and we may ask what we will, and it shall be given us, because the greatest good we can ask for ourselves, is just what we desire and consent to do unto others; and what we do shall be measured to us again. Selfishness is abomination in the sight of God and in the sight of all holy beings; but thus far we may have respect to the recompense of reward, when we have respect to his commandments, and keep them because we love what is good and right.

Rational intelligences are created with faculties to desire and seek after their own well being; and the only ground on which they fail of attaining the highest good they are capable of enjoying is this. They look with a selfish eye on their own things, and do not love and seek the interest of others as their own. Many commit the great and fatal error of striving to promote their own interest in doing what will injure another. They reverse the divine order, and instead of doing to others as they would others should do to them, they aim to do for themselves what they wish others to do for them, and do

to others what they are most unwilling to receive again. But however moral beings may order their own ways, and follow their own devices, the order of Providence is not interrupted thereby. The measure they mete is always measured to them again, and the measure they desire and seek after, is, and shall be as far from them as they are far from meting it to others.

The first and great commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," and the second is like it: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." On these two commandments the whole gospel, and the whole interest and duty of moral beings are suspended. Herein are comprehended the wisdom and the power which overcomes the world, and which are approved of God and honored in heaven. Blessed indeed are they, who are made able and worthy to do unto others as they would should be done to them. They are made perfect in love, and their prayer avails much. Their hearts are an open medium freely and continually receiving grace and truth from above, and as freely and continually transmitting and diffusing abroad in the world the savor and influence of the divine communications they receive. Their works are fruitful, and in them is fulfilled this word: "Ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

CHAPTER XII.

The Will of God, the Law and the Order of the Natural and Moral World--Character of the Divine Will—The Joy and Employment of Holy Beings --The Physical World Passively Obedient—Moral World Rebellious—The Will of God comprehends the well-being of every Creature.

THE will of God is the law of the universe; and all things visible and invisible, exist and move within the limits of its jurisdiction. Infinite wisdom and unlimited power are comprehended in the divine will, and are exercised in accordance with its holy requisitions. Whatever is true and good, is an expression of the holy will of God, and in harmony with it; and whatever is false or wrong is contrary to the order and the intentions of the divine mind. We are taught to pray, "thy will be done;" and this petition includes all that is necessary or profitable for every creature. Holy and heavenly beings who excel in knowledge desire no other or greater good;

and the highest intelligences who excel in strength, desire no other employment, and delight in doing no other work, than to accomplish the perfect will of God.

The world and all things therein were made according to his pleasure, and when this expression of the divine mind appeared, and the visible creation was finished, the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy. All things comprehended in the physical world, received from the hand of the Creator an impression of his will concerning them; and all these his wonderful works, have ever continued to exist and act in a state of passive submission to his holy laws. The operations of nature are in harmony with his designs and perfectly accomplish whatever he will do with them. Years and seasons roll on, and never depart from the order of their appointed revolutions. Day and night, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, follow each other in regular succession, and harmoniously unite their influence and their strength to execute the laws of nature's economy, and bring to pass the fulfillment of the divine purposes. The material world never rebels, never complains, never acts disorderly. The storm, the volcano, and the earthquake, are but simple expressions of passive obedience, and of nature's vast resources, and ready preparations to accomplish their own appointed work. The laws of vegetation were written by the creator's hand upon the face of the earth; and in obedience to these laws, the earth has never failed to bring forth in its season—never

failed to receive again, and again bring forth its yearly productions for the supply of man and beast.

The intellectual and moral world has likewise received from the Creator an impression of his will, and rational beings—the most excellent and valuable portion of the Creator's works, have never ceased to live and move within the influence of that "light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." But these alone having power to choose or refuse obedience; these alone have rebelled, and violated the order and harmony of the Creator's beautiful and perfect works. Consequently the moral world is in a state of derangement and misery because the will of man is opposed to the will of his Maker. The voluntary actions of human beings are not in accordance with those wise and holy laws that were designed to perfect their safety and happiness. The will of the creature is not in harmony with the will of the Creator; therefore confusion and suffering prevail in the world, because the will of man is done in the earth.

The will of God intends and provides for the happiness and well-being of every creature, and if his laws were never violated, and every creature acted in harmony with the divine will, peace and joy would reign on earth without a pause. Pure and perfect felicity is the blessed estate of every creature that

perfectly knows and perfectly obeys the will of heaven. Opposition to the laws of the Creator is the only cause of evil, and this cause exists only in the perverse will of man. Rational beings alone have resisted the will of God, and these alone have brought disorder, ignorance and death into the world. Other creatures have not rebelled, but these being made subject to man, suffer with him the dreadful effects of disobedience; and for this cause the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together.

In this present state we cannot estimate the fearful consequences that necessarily attach themselves to the least violation of the holy law of God; and unless these effects are taken away by the great Lawgiver himself, rebellion produces rebellion, until despair and misery, without measure or end, are the result. No finite mind can comprehend the whole amount of human suffering, nor fully realize the density of that moral darkness, and obliquity of judgment that pervades the understanding of every creature that resists the divine will. These effects are the natural and necessary result of breaking the laws of the great King of heaven and earth, and these effects are manifest in the immense difference they have occasioned between the present condition and character of human beings and the perfection and blessedness of our first parents in the days of primeval innocence, when guilt, and pain, and death were unknown.

It is not necessary that rational beings should

break the commands of their Creator, and interrupt the harmony of the divine government; but when the laws of God are broken, the deplorable results that follow are necessary and good. The evil and danger exist in the cause, not in the effect. The will of God comprehends the well-being of every creature, and when moral beings break commands, they break the order and the cause of their safety and happiness. The ignorance and suffering annexed to transgression are the safest and best results that can flow from disobedience; and whatever accidents or miseries are suffered in the world, these sufferings are safer and less injurious than any other effect that could possibly follow the same cause. The will of God establishes the connection between every cause and its effects, and were it possible to destroy this connection and annihilate these effects, and by this means prevent accidents and misery, this result would be a greater evil than the greatest miseries that disobedience can produce. Sin is in itself the greatest evil that exists, and if it were separated from the effects which flow from it, it would still be as dangerous and destructive as it now is. The miseries consequent upon disobedience are less dreadful than disobedience itself. It is sin, not suffering, that separates any creature from God and destroys the soul; and it is sin alone, not the effects of sin, that offends God and renders the soul incapable of enjoying and glorifying him. And hence the soul that sins, injures itself more in doing this, than any amount of suffering can injure it.

A voluntary transgression of the law of God is sin; and sin must always produce its own legitimate effects. The cause of sin exists in the voluntary choice of rational, accountable beings; the effects of sin exist in the will of God, and are of divine appointment. The will of man determines that sin shall exist—the will of God determines what the effect of sin shall be. Sin is unnecessary and unreasonable; but the effects that follow transgression are necessary and right, and no perfect or holy being can wish these effects were otherwise than they are. Sin was the procuring cause of all the miseries our Saviour endured; and in view of his agonies every creature may wish that man had never sinned; but no enlightened intelligence can wish the Saviour had never suffered. Moral beings may desire and labor to relieve the miseries and prevent the evils that sin brings upon the creatures of God, because herein they are not breaking his laws, but acting in accordance with them. Divine mercy has made provision for the relief of fallen, suffering humanity, and the divine will employs human instruments to convey and apply these merciful provisions. The effects of sin are indeed of divine appointment, but in as much as human beings are mercifully required, and divinely assisted to save themselves and others from these ruinous consequences, this salvation also is of divine appointment and according to the will of God.

Enlightened and holy intelligences fervently desire, and labor to bring the perverse will of moral beings into subjection to the will of God, and in this

work of salvation every good man delights to be employed. A violation of the law of God is the greatest loss and deepest injury that can be conceived, and hence they that are wise fear and avoid the commission of sin with more abhorance and dread than they feel in view of the suffering which sin inflicts; they know it is better to suffer the loss of all things, than to depart from the least commandment. Every creature may be willing to suffer the consequences which disobedience brings upon himself and the world, but no creature may be willing to disobey. Mankind generally strive to avoid the consequences of violating the laws of God, but do not with the same wisdom and zeal labor to avoid the cause that produces these effects. Their wisdom and strength are employed in useless efforts to separate what never can, and never ought to be separated. The cause alone is wrong and ought to be avoided—the effects necessary and right, and ought to be received with thanksgiving.

Ignorance and misery have prevailed in the world since man tasted the forbidden fruit, and notwithstanding rational beings have feared the consequences of rebellion, and labored to avoid them, they have not ceased to rebel. We have loved to violate the will of God in breaking his laws, and have continued to resist his will in striving unlawfully to escape punishment. The author of the first transgression sought to hide himself from the presence of his Maker, and by this means avoid the expression of his holy displeasure against sin; whereas justice and

truth required him to make, confession and offer an atonement, equal in value and extent with the infinite and perfect law he had violated.

The will of God which determines the effect of every cause, and provides for the well-being of every creature, determines also the obedience of faith in Christ, and connects therewith the salvation and eternal life of them that believe. The redemption of Christ procures the remission of sin, and unites the soul to God in harmony with his will; even as disobedience procures the miseries of eternal separation from him. Through faith in the atonement the soul is cleansed from all unrighteousness, and sin with its consequences washed away in the blood of Christ. The infinite value of the death and intercessions of the Son of God being sufficient to redeem every sinner that believes in Christ, and accepts redemption through the obedience of faith. Living faith not only removes the cause of all evil, but procures an amount of good equal in value and extent with the infinite amount of evil secured by disobedience. The only procuring cause of deliverance from evil, is Christ received by faith; for whose sake the disobedient are made righteous, and inherit the blessedness of those to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. The soul that lives by faith in Christ desires no other or greater good than to know and to do the will of God. Herein is salvation from sin, which is deliverance from the cause of all evil; and herein is union and harmony with the divine will, which comprehends all

possible good. That which constitutes the glory and happiness of any creature, is not that which he possesses, nor that which he is in himself or can be; but his perfection consists in the union or oneness of his own will with the will of God. The blessedness and glory of the inhabitants of heaven are perfect, because the will of God is their joy and supreme delight. They adore and live in the will of God, and herein they are united in harmony with the cause of all good; and herein they are free, and far removed from the cause of all evil. They desire no other knowledge but to know him, and love no other employment only to live and move according to his pleasure; hence they enjoy the highest state of felicity that created intelligences can conceive.

In consequence of long continued and progressive rebellion, a gloomy pall of darkness and spiritual death is spread over the earth. The moral world groans under the burden of accumulated guilt, and every where dying mortals are compelled to eat the fruit of their own doings, and to experience the wretchedness included in the wages of unrighteousness. Human beings are and must be as deeply involved in ignorance and misery as they are far from knowing and obeying those laws that were designed to make them holy and happy.

In the character and life of Christ there was given to the world a visible manifestation of the holy will of God; that human beings who were under the penalty of sin, and involved in all its fatal consequences, might come to the knowledge of the divine

will, and learn the way of salvation. He that believes and receives the doctrines and spirit of Christ is reconciled to God, and being reconciled, is counted righteous and free from sin, though the effects of sin are still acting upon him. The effects of disobedience may have more or less influence upon the soul that believes and obeys the truth as it is in Jesus; but the power of sin is broken and will in due time be done away from the heart that continues to learn of Christ. In the whole course of our probation we are more or less burdened, not only with the effects of sin in our own souls, but also with its effects in the world around us. We are confused in our perceptions of truth, and even when the spirit of truth works in us to *believe* and *will* to do what is according to the will of God, the effects of sin hinder us from acting freely, and obeying perfectly as we would. These effects do not separate us from the love of God, nor prevent his spirit from working in us still more and more powerfully, so long as we continue to believe and strive to obey; and notwithstanding they seem opposed to obedience, the truth will overcome and accomplish its own work, if the creature do not voluntarily refuse to be led by it. There is no power or effect that can prevent the perfect fruits of the spirit but in the creature himself, or in his voluntary actions; and indeed all other influences and events that have any connection with the subject are favorable to this result.

The progress and perfection of the work of grace goes on without interruption in every heart that does

not voluntarily refuse to be acted upon, or to act in harmony with that truth which commends itself to the conscience, though a period of time may intervene before we see the obedience of faith made perfect in the character and conduct. In the conceptions of finite minds an indefinite period of time is involved in the progress of salvation, and that greater light which we are not now able to look upon, but which shines every where, is, in our conceptions, far in the distance before us. But in the mind of that Being who inhabiteth eternity, and in whom is no darkness at all, there is no work nor final result concealed in the future. The beginning and the ending are alike present with Him, and he sees in the same instant every effect in every cause. But this knowledge is too wonderful for us, and while the consequences of sin are upon us, we cannot attain it. In our conceptions, the day of salvation extends beyond the present *now*, and we cannot embrace the end with the beginning. The language of inspiration speaks of things that "are not," in our present experience and knowledge, "as though they were." They are present in the conception and knowledge of the mind that is infinite, but to us they seem far off, and indeed "are not." In the conceptions of that Being whose presence fills all space, there is no such thing as a place far off. Even so with respect to distance of time, in reference to which we stand as it were, on a point between the future and the past, which we call the present. The future extends far in the distance before us, the past as far behind;

but in the mind of Him who is the "Beginning and the ending," there is nothing distant in the future—nothing distant in the past.

Divine revelation is addressed and adapted to the capacity and moral powers of fallen beings, as they are; otherwise the words of our Saviour could not be spirit and life to any creature, nor could we be judged by them in the last day. The heavenly things revealed in the word of God are sometimes spoken of according to the conceptions of sinful creatures, and sometimes presented according to the conceptions and knowledge of the spirit of truth. A revelation of the will of God is communicated to the world through the medium of the language and ideas of fallen beings, (because otherwise it were not possible to reach them,) and as the heavens are high above the earth, so are the thoughts and ways of the King Eternal high above the conceptions of ignorant creatures; hence human beings must lay their own wisdom and knowledge in the dust, when they begin to learn the will of God, or the truth as it is in Jesus. In the revelation of the divine will there are some apparent inconsistencies, and some truths that seem contradictory, and not according to our experience and knowledge; and this fact teaches us that our wisdom is folly, and that we know nothing yet as we ought to know. The cause of these apparent contradictions is not in the language employed, nor in the things revealed; but these difficulties exist because our minds are full of error, and void of truth; and doubtless these effects will, in part at

least, remain until the soul is renewed in knowledge, and human beings perfectly know, and perfectly love the holy will of God.

One of the strongest natural propensities of the human mind is to be saved from suffering and be happy; and in this desire the will of the creature is in harmony with the will of heaven. The Word of God teaches the only way of deliverance from evil, and reveals the only source or cause of happiness; and hence it is perhaps impossible that any creature believe the word of God and not work out his salvation. The goodness and love of the Creator are eminently displayed in the revelation of his will. Herein we learn it is not his pleasure that any creature should continue in sin, but rather that all should believe the truth and be saved. And this revelation also includes all that is necessary to secure perfect and eternal blessedness in heaven. To believe and love the will of God is salvation; and to continue in unbelief and love disobedience, is misery without end. The Lawgiver and Judge of human beings has not made it possible for his creatures to promote their own interest by violating his laws, and whatever his will or word requires them to do, or avoid doing, they cannot find it profitable to refuse obedience; neither can they be exposed to any danger or loss so great as that which results from a violation of his perfect will.

CHAPTER XIII.

TRUTH POWERLESS WITHOUT THE AGENCY OF THE SPIRIT—OMNIPOTENT WITH THIS AGENCY.

The Apostle said, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." For "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." And "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

1. The truth that is able to save our souls, not only proves itself to have come from God, but proves also that God by his own spirit is a continual agent in it: and this agency of the spirit is that which renders the truth effectual in the conversion and sanctification of them that hear. The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life. The sufficiency of the apostle was not in himself, but in the presence and agency of the Holy Spirit, whose gracious influences filled his soul, and brought every thought into sub-

jection to the obedience of Christ. The same agency that wrought in his own heart, attended the truth he preached, and the power and spirit of truth being present in the word, it was indeed a savor of life, or of death, to them that heard it. There is power and permanency in the Lord's doings whether he works by human instrumentality or otherwise, and what he doeth prospers. The efforts and works that are not of, and from God, come to naught, as soon as the Lord has no more occasion to employ them in working against his enemies. The apostles received Christ, and proclaimed the truths they learned of him, and their words and works have not passed away. And because their works were wrought in God, men have continued to gather and live by the fruit of their labors until this day.

2. The glorious results that attended the ministry of the immediate disciples of our Lord, (who were some of them unlearned and ignorant men,) were the effect of bearing about in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus. Grace and truth reigned in their hearts, inspiring and purifying the motives that governed the outward conduct. They were living examples of the mind and spirit of Christ, known and read of all men; and persecuted and hated of all men, who received not the spirit of the truth they preached. Since the days of the apostles the same results have followed the labors of the faithful disciples of Jesus, and their words and works have proved the excellency of the power to be of God and not of men. A mighty agency works in and with

the truth, spoken in accordance with the mind and spirit of Christ; and this agency meets the opposition of the natural heart, and brings all into subjection, or destroys without remedy, the soul that continues to resist its influence.

3. The world generally are willing to receive the ministry of the word, and to admit the truth, if it be not dispensed in the demonstration of the spirit and of power. The natural man may feel no objection to this, because it is only the spirit and savor of Christ that is hateful to the unrenewed heart. The world do not oppose the form of godliness, nor reject a popular ministry; because herein there is nothing that makes the sinner tremble, or that applies to the heart and conscience the fearful reailites of a judgment to come. Wicked men generally are well pleased with the form without the power—the letter without the spirit, and these may have their approbation and support. The kingdom of darkness is in no danger of being taken or overcome by any thing less than the whole armour of righteousness. Nothing less than the quick and powerful word of the Lord, working in the hearts of his messengers, to give the knowledge of the glory of God, can gain the victory. The truth that saves the soul must not only come from God, but his spirit must be an active agent in its communication, otherwise it is like the sayings and doings of men, which, though they may be perfect imitations of the letter and form of Christianity, fall powerless before opposing influences, without being hardly resisted. But when the servants of

Christ have taken the shield of faith for defence, and the sword of the spirit for war, there is danger in the enemy's camp, and something must be done. The friendship and spirit of the world are enmity with God, and wherever the image and spirit of Christ are manifest, there is something that must be resisted and put down. Persecution and reproach are not slow to take their stand; they only wait for those who are endued with power from on high to call them into action: and when the truth in its simplicity and strength, as it is in Jesus, is brought to bear against the spirit of the world, very soon this fact appears plainly evident—"between Christ and belial there is no concord."

4. Our great Exemplar, who was the brightness of the Father's glory, was despised and rejected of men. He was holy and harmless among sinners, yet reproach and falsehood ceased not to assault him, until his life was taken from the earth. His immemediate disciples were living examples of the life and spirit of their Master, and they also were persecuted even unto death. The world honored them with stripes and imprisonments, and at last determined to destroy their character and influence by public executions and banishment. These are not alone in suffering for righteousness sake, but in every succeeding generation the servant has been as his Lord. As many as have inherited the promise, "Lo I am with you always," have experienced also the fulfillment of these blessed words: "Because ye are not of the world therefore the world hateth you." "If

they have persecuted me they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also."

5. The witnesses for Jesus confess the things they learn of him, and their confession is the testimony of Christ; which is always rejected and denied by those who do not like to retain God in their knowledge. The world will love its own, not the things of Christ, and the world are agreed as touching one thing, namely, to destroy or banish from them the agency that converts souls, whenever and wherever its power is manifest. The wicked will not endure the light that exposes and condemns the works of darkness; and because they that live godly in Christ Jesus, shine as lights in the world, they "suffer persecution." The kingdom of darkness never suffers an assault from the faithful servants of Prince Emanuel, without raising a defence: and if the image and spirit of Christ were distinctly recognized in his followers, and they contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, the spirit of decided resistance would quickly arise, as in the days when the martyrs suffered. Truth and holiness were never more odious to the unregenerate heart, and that form of godliness and that confession of truth, which does not meet the resistance and enmity of wicked men, cannot be that which was manifest in the life and conduct of our Lord.

As it was when our Lord said, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee." even so it is now. The world have not known God, nor re-

ceived the truth in the love of it. The character of the natural heart has not changed, and the carnal mind remains as it was, enmity against God. There is strength and decision in the will of the creature that resists the spirit of truth, and prevails against every thing that is not stronger than the strong man armed. Hence the prince of darkness is well able to maintain his ground, and hold in subjection his own faithful servants, and at the same time allow the forms and doctrines of godliness to be established and flourish among them. But there is something in the life and spirit of Christianity which the children of this world cannot endure nor overcome. They cannot endure the savor of Christ, nor stand before the whole armour of righteousness. Their craft is in danger when the sword of the spirit is employed in the defence of truth, and the strong man retreats before him that is stronger than he. All things are possible to him that believeth, and when those who acknowledge the forms and doctrines of Christianity, possess the spirit and image of Christ, and proclaim the whole truth, their power and influence will quickly alarm and subdue the world.

CHAPTER XIV.

All Things declare the Glory of God—His Glory more necessary than the Preservation of the Universe—All Things exist only to serve and glorify God—The Soul lost that does not answer this Design of its Creation—The Essential Glory of God never increased or diminished—Though Sinners are Lost, Heaven loses nothing—Mansions prepared for them that love God—The Pure in Heart dwell in these Heavenly Places and behold His Glory—The Wicked choose and prepare their own Place—God every where Present, and Holiness and Heaven enjoyed in knowing and enjoying Him.

TO KNOW AND ENJOY GOD, IS TO ENJOY HOLINESS AND HEAVEN.

Glory and dominion belong to Him who made all things, and for whose pleasure all things are and were created. He existed in the fullness and plenitude of his own infinite perfections before it was said, "let there be light;" and before the universe sprang into being, all time and all space were full of

his presence and glory. His word created the purest and most exalted intelligences, and since their creation they have not ceased to ascribe praise, and glory, and dominion to him. The world of matter and the world of mind are specimens of his handy work, and show forth his skill to create, and his power to sustain. He arranged and measured the circles wherein the planets move, and established the motions and influences of suns and systems of worlds, that hang suspended upon the intimations of his will.

He is perfectly acquainted with all his works, and knows them not only in the present moment, but from their beginning to their ending they are ever present before him. There can be no change or motion in the material or intellectual world that is unknown or unnoticed by him. He is essentially and intimately present with every creature, and all things he has made are full of him. For his sake all things exist. His glory and pleasure are more necessary than the preservation of the universe; and for this alone, the universe is preserved. The design, and final result of all things, are the praise and glory of the great Creator. For this purpose the changing seasons return in their appointed times. The sun, the earth, and the waters, without ceasing, move onward in obedience to his will, and not one particle of matter has ever refused to speak his praise. All these declare his glory, and there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.

Glory and majesty, and wisdom and power, belong to God. Why then should rational beings look up-

on idols, or refuse to render perfect obedience and pure praise to him, to whom all praise and obedience are due. The Lord is our Lawgiver and Judge; and he alone holds in his own hands the cause and the effect of every thing that can be done to us, in time or in eternity. Whom beside thee, O Lord, shall we fear, and whom beside thee shall we serve and worship. Thou art the *One* that is worthy of honor; and thou art worthy of infinitely more and greater honor than all thy creatures can give. All things were created to honor thee, and thy wisdom and power are manifest in them all. The world itself would be a worthless blank if it did not show forth thy praise. The universe would instantly cease to be, if it were not performing thy will, and accomplishing thy pleasure.

Nothing is valuable, or worthy of a place in the creation, that is not employed in the service and praise of the Creator. And that spirit fills the place of a worthless intruder, that is not being prepared to glorify and enjoy him. The soul that finally turns away from God, is truly worthless, and lost; because it will not answer the design and end of its creation. It is not meet for any work, nor for any place, on earth or in heaven. It must therefore go away into its own chosen place of darkness, where the knowledge and love of God never come. And there that heart is empty—that tongue is silent, and that soul is miserable, because it is not filled with the presence of God, nor employed in admiring the glory of his power. This alone is the joy of every

creature, and this alone is sufficient to fill every creature with joy.

The essential glory and perfection of the holy One remains forever the same. No created being has ever added thereto or diminished therefrom; but his declarative glory has been revealed in many hearts where it was before unknown; and also many souls have refused to know and be filled with the spirit of holiness, because they loved, and would have darkness rather than light. Many have grieved away the enlightening spirit of truth, and enclosed their souls in a pall of willful blindness, so dark and dense, that the rays of pure light can no more enter there.

But though an immortal spirit falls away, and will not be united with the number of the redeemed; and the glory and praise of God never employ that tongue, nor fill that heart, yet the heavenly host, and the fullness of infinity lose nothing. There is no vacant place, no empty void, in all the mansions of the blessed, that is not filled with pure light and unmingled joy. The redeemed need nothing they have not, to increase their felicity, because the Lord alone is their light and their joy, and in him their happiness is full and complete as the fountain from whence it is derived. The soul that loses itself, nor the falling away of many, can take nothing away from the glory and perfection of the infinite source of blessedness. It is as though a foolish man should refuse to open the windows of his dwelling, because he loves to live in darkness. He may indeed exclude the light of the sun from his gloomy residence,

so that its cheering beams cannot find their way into his dismal habitation; but the glory and splendor of the orb of day, are not obscured or diminished because they are shut out from this place of darkness. Neither have those who enjoy the free, unclouded rays of the sun, lost any portion of its inspiring light, because one or many of their number have lost all.

There are mansions prepared for them that love God, where they may behold his glory and live in the light of his countenance. There are heavenly places in Christ, where the pure in heart are permitted to sit together, and enjoy God in his Word, in his Providences, and in the light that shines in the soul, revealing heavenly and spiritual things. In these heavenly places the pure in heart receive the promise, "We will come unto him and make our abode with him." Jesus comes again and receives them to himself, that where he is they may be also. These are the members of Christ—living stones in the building not made with hands, the habitation of God through the spirit. They come unto God believing that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and according to their faith he is their reward. They do not go far away, nor do some great thing, to find him whom they love; because he is in their midst, and manifests himself to them as he does not to the world. They worship him in the beauty of holiness, and perceive and enjoy his dominion over all things he has made. They look abroad upon the

visible creation, and with the Psalmist exclaim, "The whole earth is full of thy glory."

Far from these mansions of perfect love—"these habitations of God through the spirit," there is a place of darkness—of deep impervious night; enclosed on every side by fearful judgments and fiery indignation, which rest upon the guilty conscience, and keep the soul in a state of fearful expectation of wrath to come. These gloomy walls of thick darkness surround the impenitent heart, and here is the sinner's resting place; his own chosen home. The servant of mammon makes his own prison. The chains that prevent him from coming into the light and liberty of the gospel he forges himself; and he alone builds the only wall that separates him from the presence of God, and from the glory of his power. He dwells in the place which his master, the prince of darkness, prepares for him through the instrumentality of his own voluntary choice and voluntary actions. He loves to serve and obey the destroyer; and he employs him in doing that which makes his own misery and destruction sure. He loves self and the world, and that which he loves and seeks after, is that which draws him into the bottomless pit.

The neglecter of salvation knows not what he is doing while he is preparing his cell and securing himself therein; and he knows not because he will not come to the light that reproves and condemns sin, and saves the penitent sinner. He knows not

what he is doing while he is resisting the spirit of truth; and after ages on ages have passed away, he will only have begun to learn what he has done. His works will follow him, and the fruit of his doings continue with him, even beyond the limits of measured duration. He must dwell forever in his own place, and where Christ and heaven are, he never can come. His spirit, his character and condition are the reverse; the extreme opposite of love, faith and joy; and the immense distance which separates him from these, consists in his own unalterable and decided love of evil, and deep and strong aversion to that which is good.

Where the knowledge and love of God are, there is holiness and heaven; and the soul fully renewed in the knowledge and love of God, enjoys his presence and the glory of his power. The heavens declare his glory, the earth also is full of his praise; and were it not for the blindness which sin has brought upon the soul, every creature might behold and enjoy God in all his works. In him we live and move, and have our being; and to apprehend and be in harmony with him who is always and every where present with us, is to attain and possess the only and highest good we were created to enjoy.

CHAPTER XV.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

November, 1846.]

THIRTY-NINE years to-day, the record of my existence commenced. The experience of past life has shown me that sin is the great evil, and that sickness, poverty and the abscence of all earthly good are far better than a state of rebellion against God. In my childhood, the spirit of truth began to enlighten my dark understanding, and in all the events and changes of the past, the Lord has not cast me away from his presence nor taken his Holy Spirit from me. Goodness and mercy have followed me thus far, and in view of the spiritual and temporal blessings that have always been mine to enjoy, and comparing these with my past uprofitable life, and considering what I now am, and what I should be, I am compelled to reckon myself the chief of sinners—the most unprofitable servant, having done nothing as I ought to have done.

Many years of painful experience have brought me to know and confess, how vile I am, how great

evil I have done, and how foolish and unprofitable my life and conduct now are, and always have been. The same grace also makes me know I never was more unworthy, never more destitute of wisdom or goodness, and never more dependent upon divine mercy than at this moment. There is indeed no help for me but in God; no hope in any creature, no confidence in the flesh. There is no earthly friend, no combination of circumstances, that can make me wise or happy. My lost condition as a sinner, and that state of separation of the soul from God in which I live and move are a heavy burden, from which I groan to be delivered.

The world around me are busy here and there, and all are interested in the pursuit of some anticipated good; but none of these things interest me, neither can I enjoy, or desire to gain anything I can find in the world. I seem to be as one dead among the living, having no influence, or work to do, that seems necessary or profitable to myself or others. My days are passing away, and I know not for what purpose I live. The love of the world, and the enjoyments derived from earthly prosperity—the delight in acquiring knowledge and reading many books—all these once interesting and pleasant objects have lost their value, and I see no profit, and feel no pleasure in them. The only work my hands find to do, and the only place where my burdened spirit rests, is in recording my own simple thoughts and feelings as I am able to write them. The knowledge and love of God includes all that is pre-

cious or valuable, and to be renewed in his image and made able and worthy to serve and glorify him, is all I desire to learn or enjoy; and for this I hope to wait, and watch and pray, until my change come.

O Lord thy judgments are right; thy ways are perfect, and thou doest all things well. Against thee have I sinned and done evil in thy sight all my days. I deserve all I have, or can suffer, and in view of what I am and what I have done; there is no cross nor humiliation that I ought not to be willing to bear. I cannot return to thee thine own with usury, for I have wasted and devoured thy mercies and cannot answer for one of my transgressions; I am silent before thee for thou knowest me and I cannot speak but to condemn myself. The nature and effect of every action of my past life are all recorded in thy book, and I cannot take from thence anything I have done. My account has gone out of my hands, and what it is now, it will be when I stand before the Judgment seat. The record of thirty-nine years is sealed up, and cannot be unloosed or corrected until the books are opened and every one judged according to their works.

WHAT DO CHRISTIANS MORE THAN OTHERS.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who came out from God, and appeared in the likeness of men, is the living fountain and visible manifestation of pure religion in the world. Whatever is of or from him, is Christianity; and whatever comes from men, or is of the

world, is not Christianity, but opposed to Christ. The spirit and things of the world are the reverse —the opposite of the spirit and things of God.— Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life; and they that believe in him receive power to become the sons of God, and these are no more of the world, but are chosen out of it, and the world do not know them, because the world know not the spirit and life which is in them, and which is manifest in their heavenly conversation and blameless conduct.

As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Being created anew in Christ, they walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit; and these are living examples of Christianity in the world. They are called Christians because they are like Christ, and because Christ is in them; of a truth they are the light of the world, and salt of the earth. The help of the Spirit and the words of eternal life are their wisdom and strength, and by these they are led into all truth and all obedience. Christians cannot be nor act like the world, because the spirit and customs of the world are from beneath, and are of the wicked one; and these things cannot please or employ the mind of the spirit which is from above. The desires of Christians are not inspired by earthly things, neither can they enjoy or labor for them. They desire and labor only to please God, and to enjoy the reward of doing his will. They are diligent in business, and faithfully perform all the social and public duties of life, because they fear God and love his commandments. They have

nothing to do in the world, only that which is necessary in order to work out their own salvation, and to help all others do the same. The lusts of the flesh have not dominion over them, for they are the servants of Christ, and being led by his Spirit are not subject to the flesh. They eat and drink not to please the appetite, but to preserve life and strength to do their Master's will. They clothe the body because health and the constitution of our nature require it; but in preparing and putting on their apparel, they are not subject to the changing fashions and opinions of a wicked world. The desire of the eye and the pride of life are banished from their wardrobes and from their dwellings, and simplicity and Godly sincerity are manifest in their outward appearance, and also in their conversation, which is innocent and heavenly.

But that which more especially distinguishes the character and conduct of Christians from others, is the principle of holy love. The powerful and purifying influence of divine love, operates in the renewed heart, and no where else can it be found in the world. The desires and pursuits of Christians, begin and end in love; and their words and works are an expression of this heavenly principle. Without the spirit of love no one can be like Christ, and with this living principle in the soul, no one can be like the world. If we know the character and works of Christ, we may know the disposition and conduct of Christians, for they are like him. Our Lord and Saviour loved every creature. He laid aside his do-

minion, his riches and glory, and sought after us, that he might save us from misery and make us like himself. He humbled himself, and took upon him our nature, that we might be able to learn of him, and follow him to heaven. He was clothed with a body like ours, and was seen among men thirty and three years, and in his life and death suffered more than we are able to suffer; and all this he freely gave himself to endure, that we might inherit his kingdom and reign with him forever. He is the pattern, the holy and perfect example given for Christians to follow after and imitate. They cannot indeed equal the copy, but they can resemble it, and according to their ability they do likewise. They love their neighbor, their enemy and all mankind, and are willing to give the treasures and honors of this world, if thereby they may persuade those for whom Christ died, to come and be made holy and happy.

The works of Christians are fruitful and productive of much good. The words of eternal life being sown in their hearts, they bring forth many fold, and the fruit thereof is righteousness and peace. Their words and works are the channel through which the pure principles of truth and holiness are conveyed to the world; and these are the salt and light thereof. The moral world contains within itself the elements of its own destruction; and if the spirit and power of Christianity were not there, its miserable inhabitants could have no other portion, and know no other prospect than a fearful looking

for of judgment and fiery indignation. But now it is not so, because there are members of Christ in the world; and through them, and for their sake a healthful and saving influence is shed abroad in every place, and we are not consumed. The children of God with one hand of faith take hold of the mighty arm, and with the other hand of love reach every lost sinner. In answer to prayer, blessings innumerable are ever flowing from the throne above, and descending upon the righteous and the wicked. The prayers of the saints are the medium through which all receive freely of the abundant grace and goodness of our common Saviour and Lord.

Christians are agreed as touching many things, and by them unceasing prayer is offered, that righteousness and peace may prevail in the world, and the will of God be done on earth as it is in heaven. Their prayer is fervent and effectual, and their desire shall not fail, neither shall their hope perish. The great and precious promises belong to them, and their prayers and labors shall end in the profession and enjoyments of the good things they have prayed for. They are now coming up through much tribulation, and being made ready to take possession of the kingdom prepared for them. It does not yet fully appear who they are, or what they are doing, and the world do not acknowledge them as the sons of God, nor receive their testimony concerning Christ. They are not in high places, and perhaps for a little season may remain in their present embryo state, until the work of grace be perfected in

their souls, and that which is written concerning them be fulfilled. "Then shall" we "return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not;" and then it shall fully appear what Christianity is, and what Christians have done more than others.

CHAPTER XVI.

View of the Soul in its Fallen State—Dark and Powerless—No Hope but in God.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

January 1st, 1847.]

The first day of this new year, I find myself a guilty, weak and helpless woman. I seem to be far from God, and yet surrounded by his presence and held in his hand every moment. I know not the way that he takes, and his glorious majesty, his holiness and power, make me afraid. I fear none beside him, and dare not obey or trust any other. I am of the earth earthy; and every instant liable to be overcome by the evils that are in the world. I cannot keep myself, neither can any creature help me, for indeed every creature is against me, if I hope in any but God.

Like the worm that crawls upon the ground in its own low place and impotent state, so my soul within

me lies dark and powerless, and lives and moves amidst the ruins of its fallen state. As the worthless insect is far from apprehending and enjoying the knowledge and privileges of rational beings, so my limited conceptions and dark understanding are far from comprehending and enjoying the presence of God and the glory of his power. But it is given me to walk in the light of his countenance, and to learn his commandments and do them, and herein my state and prospects are far better than the insect that lives and dies without one ray of light.

But wherein are my prospects any better than the prospects of irrational creatures, if I neglect the only salvation that can deliver me from the ruins of this earthly fallen state; and where can I go, or what can I do to enjoy any better portion than is given to the beasts that perish, if I come not to God, nor receive his salvation. If I should gain the whole world and remain a stranger and an enemy to God, my condition would be far more abject and deplorable than the state of the meanest reptile. Things earthly and temporal may indeed for a season please and hold in subjection the earthly, selfish heart; but things spiritual and eternal are able to purify and elevate the soul above the desires and pleasures of the world. Better things are provided for us than the things that perish, and this one thing is needful to seek and attain them. Whatever others may do, or whatever is being done in the world, what is that to me; whom have I to follow but Jesus, and what can I desire but to come where he is and be like him.

If reputation or influence, or goods be given me, they are mine to improve and return back to God; if they be injured or taken away, they are not mine to defend. It is the Lord, and I am the worm, let him do what seemeth him good.

The year and day are come when those who choose the Lord for their present and future portion, must trust in him alone. The friends of the world, and the world's good things, have no power in them to do good; but the good that is done in the earth, the Lord doeth it; and he requires his children to believe and acknowledge these truths in all their ways. All things work for good, and no good thing is withheld from them that have ceased to have pleasure or confidence in earthly things, and that have learned to enjoy and trust in God alone. Since it is given me to know these things, I must do them, and no more be like the friends of the world, who seek after and trust in the world's good things. I must live as seeing him who is invisible, and do what I do heartily, as unto the Lord and not unto men. I must not fear what man can say or do unto me, and why should I, for

> "What is he whose scorn I dread,
> Whose wrath or hate makes me afraid,
> A worm—an heir of death—a slave
> To sin—a bubble on the wave."

The children of God are not in danger, because there are numbers and influence combined against them; but they are in danger, because they are exposed to enter into the spirit of the world and be

like them that know not God. There is no danger or loss, in losing earthly things, and suffering much for conscience and the truth's sake; but there is great danger and loss in being overcome of evil and entering into temptation. It is good to learn wherein we have been deceived, and safe to feel that earthly hopes and prospects are vanishing away. These trials are intended to separate us from the things of the world, that we may know and enjoy the things that are freely given to us of God. We are of the earth earthy, but are called to exchange earthly for heavenly things. In looking heavenward the prospect is bright and glorious, but in looking to the world we see every refuge must soon fail, and every good soon pass away. There is no help for us but in God; and in this present state we cannot be strong or safe, only in the strength of faith; nor can we be in peace, only as we rest in God, and wait for his salvation.

"TAKE HEED HOW YE HEAR."

"Take heed how ye hear," and again it is written "take heed what ye hear." This counsel comes from him who knows what is in man, and who knowing the spirit and the ability of them that speak, and them that hear, gives this important instruction. "Take heed how ye hear;" hear for the sake of learning the truth, that you may walk in it: "and take heed what ye hear." Examine and prove all things, and believe not every spirit, but try the

spirits whether they be of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

The great Head of the Church sends by whom he will send, and those that preach the gospel are doubtless many of them chosen of God and appointed by him to this work. By his spirit's power he selects and separates whom he will, to minister in holy things, and to preach the truth that is able to sanctify and save them that believe. It does not appear however, that all who carry the gospel, are themselves being saved by the truth they preach. Men can hear and acknowledge the whole truth, and yet know nothing of the power of godliness; and so also the messenger may deliver his message, and explain to others the way of life and salvation, and yet be a castaway.

The truth is holy and powerful, and the ordinances of the sanctuary are good and profitable, because they come from God. The importance and authority of the truth and of the means of grace, originate in their divine Author, and are not rendered void or worthless, because the instruments employed in their administration are unholy and unfaithful. The wicked may be deceived or may deceive others, and by concealing their true character under a cloak of godliness, occupy a place in the service of the sanctuary. The believing penitent whose province is not to discern or judge the character of him who fills the sacred office, may draw near with a true heart, humbly confessing his sins; and in doing so, is not prevented from receiving the

grace these means are intended to convey, because the unhallowed intruder stands before the altar.

Those who are called of God to minister in holy things, are called to be pure in heart and holy in life. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." And if there be one wo resting upon them that being called will not preach the gospel, there are doubtless many woes for those who will take upon them this sacred office without clean hands and pure hearts. As he that is called of God is called to be holy, so he that is approved and set apart of men must give this evidence of his holy calling, and show forth in his heavenly conversation and conduct, that he is faithful to him who hath called him. And as there are woes for them who preach the truth and are not sanctified by it, so there are woes also for those who consent to receive and maintain the unsanctified in the holy service of the sanctuary.

The Lord is not straitened for means or instruments to do his own work. He can speak at any time by whom he will, and his word is powerful and will accomplish the thing whereunto it is sent. But if the spirit and power of truth have not sanctified and made pure and clean the hand and heart of him who ministers in holy things, he is liable to speak according to his own imperfect experience; and when he speaks of himself according to the decisions of his own unsanctified judgment, his counsel is not of God but of himself.

How important then that every hearer of the word be taught of God, that he may know of the doctrine,

and discern what he hears whether it be of God or whether the messenger speak of himself. It is no doubt given to those that do the will of God to separate the precious from the vile, and discern the doctrine and counsel that comes from above, and that which comes from man. They have been taught of God to take heed how they hear, and what they hear, and the anointing they have received of him, teacheth them all things, and they need not be deceived.

The high Priest prophesied truly when he said, "that Jesus should die for that nation, and not for that nation only, but also that he should gather together in one, the children of God that were scattered abroad." Those who were doing the will of God, could hear and apply this prophecy to the events intended by it; and could worship and trust in the accused and persecuted one; while the high priest who uttered this prophecy could take counsel against Jesus to put him to death. The counsel of the high priest concerning Jesus was according to the wisdom of the world and the policy of the Jews; while the prophecy he uttered, was the truth that came from God; and those only who were divinely enlightened could know when he spake of himself or when he spake according to the spirit of truth. Every one must therefore take heed how and what they hear, otherwise they may be deceived, and take the wisdom of the world and the opinions of men for the truth that comes from God, and thereby put darkness for light, and light for darkness.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Primitive Church—Character of the first Christians—Falling Away.

ORDER AND PERFECTION OF THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION.

In the dispensations of Providence there is a beginning, a progress, and a fulfillment or completion. "First the blade, then the ear, after this the full corn in the ear." In the beginning of the gospel dispensation the Christian Church was like the blade or seed springing out of the earth, small and feeble in its commencement, but excellent and good, because in that time and place it was what the Master intended it to be. The first Christians were baptized into one spirit, and their character and influence in those days were a true and faithful exhibition of the beginning or infancy of the Christian Church in the world. They loved one another and had all things common; hence there were none among them that

lacked. "They continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people, and the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved."

Many were in favor of the character of these primitive Christians, and approved the simplicity and purity of their lives, who did not become members of this holy Church. The Lord added such as should be saved. Those who were added were in a state of salvation; and while they continued steadfast in this state they were being saved. At first the Church of Christ was made up of saints. Sinners were not permitted to incorporate themselves with it. Neither the deceiver nor the deceived, could unite or long remain in connection with those whose habits and disposition were a continual exhibition of the perfect fruits of the Spirit, and not be exposed and condemned. Those only who were willing to forsake all for Christ, could be his disciples, and these only were added to the community of Christians in those days.

How wise and prudent, and how excellent and lovely were the character and conduct of this company of Christians. They were indeed a peculiar and distinguished people, and the light of the world shone out from them. They were few in numbers, without wealth, and without worldly wisdom or honors, and yet they were strong and successful; a terror to evil-doers wherever their character or doctrines were known. For this cause they were hated

by the wicked, and persecuted even to death. They loved to be poor, humble and Christ-like; and herein they were distinct and separate from sinners, because so unlike them. They lived in the world, but their spirit and doctrines proved they were not of, nor like the world, but like him who had called and chosen them out of it.

But how soon did the fine gold become dim, and the new wine mix with water. Even in the first age of the primitive Church, the faithful and beloved disciple had occasion to write, "remember therefore from whence thou art fallen and repent and do the first works." The first seven Churches did not keep their garments white, nor retain the purity and simplicity of their first faith and first love, even for one generation. How soon did this perfect and heavenly plant incline downward and bend under the influence of earth's attractions. When it began to receive nourishment from the favors and friendship of the world, its strength began to diminish and its faith and zeal began to expire in deadness and formality. It has indeed continued to extend its branches far and wide, and continued also to receive the support and honor of wicked men, until it has become like the trees of the forest, and the once heavenly and fruitful plant now bears the fruit of a degenerate and strange vine. It has become an astonishment and a mystery to itself, and stands like a monument before the world, or like a grand and ancient building forsaken of the lawful proprietor, and left to be the habitation of strangers; so that whoever will, may

claim a place within its walls, and without fear or shame contend for equal rights and privileges there. The Master and Lord of the temple does not manifest his presence and exercise his authority, in overthrowing the tables and seats of the money changers, and driving from his once holy and sacred dwelling-place all things that offend, and them that do iniquity.

This state of things has not come to pass in a moment; but for ages past these general and dreadful effects have been growing out of the unbelief and worldly prosperity of the Church. Almost two thousand years ago the Light came into the world, and this Light was designed to increase, and grow brighter and brighter until it led the blind to the knowledge of the truth, and dispelled the darkness of earth's moral night. No doubt these glorious results would soon have followed in their own time and order, and truth and holiness long since prevailed every where, if men had not loved and chosen darkness rather than light. And because the Church have not received and improved the measure of grace and truth sent down from above, and designed to sanctify and make her all-glorious within, she remains in the darkness and confusion that prevails this day.

Where much is given much is required. The Church has been like a vine planted in a fruitful field. The Lord of the vineyard has kept it alive, and cultivated and nourished it for himself, that it might bring forth fruit to perfection, and present its

offerings in righteousness. No good thing has been withheld from his people, and no more could have been done for his vineyard than has been done for it. A faithful improvement of the talents and privileges conferred upon the Church, and designed to build her up on her most holy faith, would doubtless have made her what prophecy and promise declare she shall be. Not only her confession, but her character and her works would be "holiness to the Lord." She would be able to pay her vows unto the Most High, and to offer the sacrifice of perfect obedience and pure praise; and no confusion nor any unclean thing could abide within her gates. In the day of trouble she would call on the strong for help, and he would deliver, and whatever might oppose would work for her good. These are the good things prepared for thee, O Zion; but thou hast not attained nor enjoyed them. Thou hast not been pressing after and rising higher in the knowledge and possession of heavenly things, but thou hast rather fallen away from that which was thine in the beginning. It is even now required of thee according to that thou hast received, and truth and justice claim with usury, the talents committed to thy trust.

For ages past, the developments of Providence, and the experience and testimony of faithful Christians, have been continually increasing the spiritual riches and gracious ability of the people of God. The treasures of wisdom and knowledge which have been accumulating for ages, have greatly increased the obligations of the Christian Church. Our fathers had

not, and could not have, all that has been recorded and transmitted to their posterity. These blessings come from God, and are intended and adapted to promote the improvement and perfection of his children. The way of holiness has been clearly delineated and marked out, by a cloud of witnesses who have walked therein; and their testimony applies the truth in its simplicity and power, to every mind that is willing to be enlightened, and to follow on to know the Lord. Having before us this evidence of the power of faith to secure present and full salvation, and in view of the high way cast up, and made plain and easy to walk in; we have indeed many talents, and help sufficient to prevail against the powers of darkness, and overcome the world.

The wisdom and love of the Father, have made abundant provision for his children to be a holy and powerful people. They are the servants of the great King, and it is his good pleasure to give them the kingdom. If they be faithful and obedient, separate from idols and every unclean thing, the Lord will delight in them, and distinguish and bless them as his own peculiar people. When the spirit of holiness, or perfect faith and perfect love abound in the heart, working in and with those who profess the name of Christ, the Church will be like a refining fire, consuming the dross, and dispelling the darkness that remains within the sphere of her sacred and powerful influence. Ignorance and moral evil cannot long abide in the presence of holiness and truth; but whatever is of the wicked one will as-

sume the attitude of defence and quickly work out its own destruction, or consent to be overcome of good, and stand on the Lord's side. Even now this day, as in former days, the children of God may hear and obey the exhortation of Joshua: "Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land, for they are bread for us, their defence is departed from them and the Lord is with us; fear them not."

The history of the Church and the pages of inspiration, present a multitude of witnesses, and many examples of the power and presence of divine grace to sanctify and reward the faithful. Their testimony and example are witnesses for God to this generation, that we may learn what our duty and privileges are, and know and enjoy the good things he is pleased to give to his faithful servants. Enoch had the testimony that he pleased God, and he was translated without seeing death. Abraham had faith to offer up his only son, and many great and precious promises were given to him. Elijah could say to the captain of fifty, "If I be a man of God let fire come down from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty, and the fire of God came down and consumed them." Daniel remained all night in the lion's den, and the Hebrew children walked in the furnace of fire and received no harm.

The disciples of Christ inherit a far greater measure of the spirit than did the disciples of Moses, and the blessings and privileges prepared for the Christian Church are more and greater, than the literal

seed of Abraham claimed or expected to enjoy. The spirit of prophecy and the substance of the promises are the inheritance of the saints. These exceeding great and precious blessings are presented in the gospel that Christians may seek after and enjoy them; and the disciples of Jesus are not only permitted, but required to enter into the possession of their purchased inheritance, and glorify God in the improvement and acknowledgement of his gifts.

POWER OF FAITH.

The faith delivered to the first Christians, enabled them boldly to say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me;" and by their works their faith was made manifest. They gave their goods, their labors and their life, for the substance of the promises, and counted all they gave as nothing in comparison with what they received. They could heal the sick and cast out devils. They could sing praises in prison, or could leave their chains there and pass through the massy doors of their dungeon, while their keepers trembled and became as dead men. They could take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and triumph in suffering, persecution and death.

No doubt more and greater works than these might now be manifest in the Christian Church if she stood on her own foundation, having in her possession the faithful improvement of the talents committed to her trust. Our Lord said to his first disciples, "The works that I do shall ye do also, and

greater works than these shall ye do because I go to the Father." And also, "go ye into the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; speak with new tongues; take up serpents; lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover, &c. Our Lord did not limit these promises to the first disciples, but in all the world to them that believe. Not that every particular member of Christ should be endued with all, or any of these powers; but these gifts and promises should belong to and follow the united body of believers, and be fulfilled and made manifest among them. And also in our Lord's last prayer for his disciples—which includes the substance of all the promises, it is written, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one." And again our Lord said to his disciples, "Lo I am with you always;" not limiting the promise to those alone with whom he was then personally present, but embracing therein every disciple, "always, even to the end of the world."

"All the promises of God in Christ are yea, and in him amen to the glory of God by us." And when

the conditions on which these promises are suspended are fulfilled on the part of the creature, there is no delay on the part of the Creator in fulfilling them. God is unchangeable, to-day as yesterday the same. Faith has not lost its power, nor humble obedience its reward. Whenever the Church has forsaken her sins and believed and walked in the truth, she has been honored of God and his word has been fulfilled in her. According to her faith and obedience she has been endued with power from on high, and the presence of the Lord has been "as a wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midst" of his faithful ones.

If the broken and divided members of Christ were united in one body, and all these as one family or Church, were contending for the faith delivered to the saints, having no carnal weapons in their hands, the faith and spirit of the prophets and apostles would be manifest in their midst. If they sought not the honor that comes from men they would be honored of God. If they desired not nor possessed treasures on earth, they would be rich in the possession of all things. The heavenly things our Fathers enjoyed, and the fullness of the blessings of the gospel have never been withheld from them that would walk uprightly; and if the children of God as a people, had never departed from the holy commandments delivered unto them, nor fallen away from the doctrines and privileges which they have believed and acknowledged they might attain, they would now possess and enjoy greater things than the primitive

Christians attained. The order of Providence in relation to his people is progression. Continual advancement is the way of the spirit, the way of holiness; and the necessary result of continuance in this way, is rising higher and higher in the knowledge and love of God, world without end.

But now as a Church we are compelled to admit the claims of the gospel are far in advance of our faith and obedience, and we must acknowledge we have not performed the conditions on which the fulfillment of the promises are suspended, nor accepted the blessings prepared and presented for our reception. We have been ever learning the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, and have not come to that knowledge and experience of the truth that enables us to apprehend and enjoy what our Lord intended and promised in these words, "All that I have is thine." According to our faith it is now being done to us, and notwithstanding the abundant provisions of the gospel, and the testimony of many witnesses, we seem to be like those of whom it was said, "He could do no mighty works there, because of their unbelief."

The Church is indeed able to reckon almost an innumerable multitude of members, and permitted to enjoy the wealth and honors of the world; but one cannot chase a thousand, nor two put ten thousand to flight. Devils are not subject to them, nor can they do mighty works in their Master's name. The faith that removes mountains, and that works effectually to the pulling down of strong holds, is not

manifest among us this day. The Church does indeed share largely in the honor that comes from men, and the world are willing to lend their aid in order to increase her worldly prosperity. But with respect to the wisdom and power that comes from above, she is weak and poor indeed. She cannot reckon herself dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God, neither can she prove as a reason of her hope, that she is what the promises and privileges of the gospel require her to be. When she would present evidence that her calling is divine, and that her doctrines and her authority are of God, she does not say, "the works that I do bear witness of me, and if I do not the works of God believe me not;" but she refers back to the testimony she gave and the works she performed in the infancy of her existence. The achievements and faith, and holiness of the primitive Christians are her strong arguments, and she refers to these because the character and position she now occupies are not clear and decisive testimony that her works are wrought in God, and that as a body he now accepts and glorifies himself in her offerings.

She retains the name first given to the disciples at Antioch. She calls herself their successor. She professes to believe their doctrines, and reckons herself the only lawful inheritor of the blessings and rewards promised to the faithful. These are indeed her lawful privileges, and herein her true name and character are described, if since her first union with Christ she has not fallen away from her first faith

and first love. If her present state of grace, her holiness and faith are what they should be in this day and age of the world, then indeed, "all things are hers," and not one of the good things spoken concerning her are wanting. If she has not turned away from the holy commandments delivered unto her, she is preserved blameless, and is now unspotted from the world. The character and service of the Church are required to be according to the talents received; or rather her faith and obedience should be equal to the amount which a faithful improvement would have gained in the time and circumstances given for improvement. But if she has turned away from the light that has been continually growing brighter and brighter, and refused to walk in the truth that would surely and quickly have renewed her in knowledge and true holiness, and given her the victory over the world; she is in darkness, and her condemnation is great in proportion as the grace and truth given were abundant and powerful.

It was with "a mighty hand and out-stretched arm," that the people of God started to go out of Egypt. Miracles and wonders were wrought in their behalf; and with many promises and the special help of God for their encouragement, for a little season they went on prosperously. But their continual backslidings hindered them; and forty years were consumed in reaching the good land whither they might have come in so many weeks. And after all their sufferings and wanderings, and the many won-

derful deliverances wrought out for them, only two of all that great multitude that were called out of Egypt, ever saw the good things promised them. They could not inherit their own promised inheritance because of unbelief.

The beginning of the Christian Church was peculiarly distinguished and favored of God. She was called and chosen out of the world; and though the world and all men are against her, a stronger and mightier agency was manifest in her midst, and because her counsel and work were of God, she could not be overthrown. Her calling and her work was to go forth conquering and to conquer, until righteousness covered the earth, and all flesh saw the salvation of God. The requisitions and promises of the gospel, claim and embrace greater and better things than the good land of Canaan, and the earthly Jerusalem which the Church in the wilderness had in view in her journeyings. They embrace the kingdoms of this world, and the universal dominion of righteousness and peace. For this purpose, the Christian Church was endued with power from on high, and the fullness of the blessings of the gospel freely given her, that she might accomplish this mighty work. A greater than Joshua was in her midst to lead her on to victory. All power in heaven and earth was committed to the Captain of her salvation, who said for her encouragement, "Lo, I am with you always;" and "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

What God promises he is able at any time to per-

form, and the work he gives his people to do, he is able to accomplish by them; and not one jot or tittle of his word is withheld from them that live by it. Inasmuch as his people will live according to every word he has spoken, in so much every good word and promise are fulfilled toward them; and inasmuch as they fall short of perfect obedience, in so much the great and precious promises are far off, and they cannot reach their fulfillment. The Israelites might have believed and obeyed God, and gone directly onward from the Red Sea to Jordan. There was nothing but their continual backslidings that hindered them in the way. The Lord was not slack concerning his promise, nor did he refuse or delay to give any counsel or support necessary for their continual advancement, when they would receive and improve it. It was not his good pleasure they should wander so long in the wilderness, and he would have brought them immediately to the promised land, if they had loved to be led by him; and because they so often and so many times grieved him in the desert, he sware in his wrath they should not enter into his rest, save those two that wholly followed him.

STATE OF THE CHURCH.

In the beginning of the gospel dispensation, exceeding great and precious promises were given to the Christian Church. These promises like those before given to the people of God, were suspended on the condition of faith and obedience; and the Church has always believed and confessed it was her

duty and privilege to press after, and attain and enjoy their fulfillment. They have always been in view, near at hand, ready and waiting for her reception; and if like Caleb and Joshua she had wholly followed the Lord, she would long since have reached the inheritance of her promised millennial state.

But now eighteen hundred years have been consumed in wanderings and backslidings, and the Church of the living God is seen on earth only in its present broken and fragmentary state. The members of Christ are scattered every where, and so conformed to the world, we can hardly know them, or discern between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not. Better things than these are prepared for them that love God; and in the beginning of the gospel dispensation, these better things were not held in the distance of two thousand years, but even then they were in readiness, even as they are now, for those who through grace were able and ready to receive them. The Church of Christ was and is called to be a holy and powerful people, a name and a praise in all the earth. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was and is sufficient to make her so, and the only ground on which she can meet the claims of the Gospel or enjoy its fullness, is that whereon she was and is called to stand.

The Church as one body, cannot measure herself by the world, nor by the opinions of men, nor by what she once was; but her service, and faith, and her position in the world as they now are, must be compared with what they would have been if her

course had been continually onward and upward from the beginning. In this balance of the sanctuary, the Christian Church as one body must be weighed; and if her moral character and spiritual state do not correspond with the benefits and blessings conferred upon her, she is *found wanting*. Her path has been growing brighter and brighter since the infancy of her existence, and the light of eighteen hundred and fifty calls her to an account. If her talents are buried—if her fruit is not perfect—if the light in her has become darkness, she is indeed WANTING, and this impressive, solemn admonition and fearful declaration stands recorded against her: "*Remember* therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place except thou repent."

As a Church and people, the knowledge of our state seems to be hidden from us. We see but perceive not, we hear but do not understand, and we rest as unconcerned and well satisfied as though the *cloud* by day and *fire* by night rested upon our sanctuary. We profess to know God, but in works deny him. We reckon ourselves his chosen, peculiar people, and yet his glorious presence and power to save to the uttermost are seldom manifest among us. How great is our darkness and we know it not. The light shines, but we do not comprehend it.

In this enlightened and prosperous country, the comparative physical strength of the Christian Church is probably greater than among any other

people on earth. Here, as in no other country, she enjoys every privilege that numbers, and wealth and talents can give. The doctrines and ceremonies of our holy religion are allowed to exert their influence in every place, and her members fill many of the highest offices in the gift of this great nation. In the halls of Congress and in our State Legislatures, prayer is offered daily, and the principles and precepts of Christianity are publicly confessed and acknowledged among all classes.

But our works do not correspond with our profession, and our doings are directly adverse to the principles of truth and righteousness by which we profess to be governed. Slavery and oppression are tolerated in the midst of this Christian people, and this enlightened Christian government has recently waged an aggressive war against a neighboring people, and paid its Christian subjects millions of money to kill and destroy their fellow creatures. The Church is not separate and free from these great abominations, but many, very many, are invited to her communion, and sit in her heavenly and holy places, who contend for, and have pleasure in them. Pride, covetousness, and the love of the world also, can live in her bosom, without fear of banishment or condemnation.

These, and many other grievous and presumptuous sins exist among us, and yet the great community of professing Christians are not alarmed nor convicted. The general opinion is, the Church is flourishing, and peace and spiritual prosperity abound

in all her borders. She is not afflicted and astonished because her character and prospects are what they are; and her prayer is, that she may continue to enjoy her present temporal and spiritual state, rather than that she may be delivered from it. May not the words of the prophet have reference to this state of things: "Yea they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions and bring their fears upon them." And the words of the apostle, also: "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, because they received not the love of the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

What stronger delusion can deceive the human mind, than the delusion that makes us believe we are on the right foundation, and God accepts our works, when we are sinning against him. Our delusion is strong indeed when we mistake the form of godliness for the spirit and power thereof, and suppose we are rich, and have need of nothing, when we are poor, and have need of all things. Can we say as a Church, our gold is tried in the fire; or can it be said her garments are white and unspotted from the world. Where are the assemblies of the saints of whom it may be said, these are a holy and peculiar people, beloved and honored of God in the world. Rather must we not say; "how is the beautiful city become a harlot," and our "Father's house a place of merchandise," from whence the divine presence and glory have departed. For this cause

we are weak, our strength is small, and very few mighty works of grace and salvation are being wrought among us.

O that we would now, even this day, know and acknowledge our transgressions, and open our hearts to receive the truth that would make us truly wise. Then we should no more cry, peace, peace, until the Lord had spoken it. We should no more rest nor dream of prosperity until the children of God that are scattered abroad were gathered into one, and become a holy and powerful people in the earth. O Zion, glorious things are spoken of thee, and that that is written will surely be fulfilled. We shall see greater things than our fathers have seen, and the day that is coming is better than all the days that are past. Even now prayer is made without ceasing for a revival of religion that shall be followed by no backslidings. When those who name the name of Christ shall be careful to depart from all iniquity, and the Lord our Righteousness, be glorified and admired in all his saints. Yet a little while and we shall know our state, and acknowledge our "falling away," and learn the remedy, and we shall be healed. Truly our disease is great, our wound is grievous, and we are brought very low; but there is balm in Gilead, and there is a Physician there, and the health of the daughter of his people shall surely be recovered.

The Church is now filled with her own backslidings, and she must eat the fruit of her doings until she learn to refuse the evil and choose the good, and

come up to the profession of those high and heavenly attainments prepared for her in the gospel. Then she will appear in her own native simplicity and purity, separate and free from earthly entanglements, being chosen and honored of God as his own pleasant portion, his distinguished dwelling place forever.

The sure word of prophecy and of promise have clearly revealed the prospects and the portion of the saints, so that even now, while darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people, the children of God may rejoice and "lift up their heads, knowing their redemption draweth nigh." "He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger forever." "The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." "After those days saith the Lord I will put my law in their inward part, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people." "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more." Blessed day, the desire and the hope of every waiting soul. How long, O Lord, how long.

The testimony of Jesus, and the substance of the promises will yet be given to the people of God, and be clearly apprehended and made manifest in the experience and life of his children. Even now are there

not some signs, some evident tokens of the speedy accomplishment of this long desired and blessed event. Do not the inspirations of truth teach the faithful to pray for it; and is not the spirit of grace and fervent supplication given to many who do without ceasing, pray, "thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." We believe and wait for that we see not, when the spirit helps our infirmities, and teaches us how to pray. The groanings of the Spirit are an expression of the mind of Christ in his members, making intercession according to the will of God. The prayer of the Spirit is the effectual prayer that avails much, because it comes from God and returns to him again. When the prayer of faith apprehends and takes hold of any word or promise of God, he speaks, or rather he has spoken, and it is done. Perhaps there can be no surer evidence of the fulfillment of the exceeding great and precious promises, than that the children of God are led by his spirit to believe and pray for them. While they believe and pray for their fulfillment in the future, in the future they shall be fulfilled. When they believe and pray for their fulfillment now, *now* it shall be done.

If the prayer of faith be limited in its aspirations, embracing only a limited number of the members of Christ, and apprehending only a limited measure of the fullness of the promises, the answer will be limited accordingly. But when faith apprehends the extent of the promises, embracing therein every member to whom they belong, the result is even ac-

cording to this faith, and every member receives the fullness of the promise embraced. The body of Christ is not many, but one living unity, and one mind; one spirit actuates every member of this one body. Hence the spirit of prayer which draws one member to pray for all, leads every other member also to make intercession for the same thing; otherwise there would be confusion in the prayers of the saints, and they would not be in harmony with the mind of the Spirit which helps us to pray according to the will of God. The Holy Spirit can speak to whom he will, and they shall hear and know it is the Lord. He can speak, and in the same moment, in every place, the same still voice is heard in every heart. Herein are the strength and harmony of purpose and action that belongs exclusively to the children of God. Having the Spirit of Christ, they can do all things, and nothing can be impossible to them that believe.

While ancient Israel were subject to the cruel bondage of their Egyptian task-masters, what could they do? They had not wherewith to present the least offering; neither had they time or place to worship the God of their Fathers. Other lords had dominion over them, and they knew nothing but submission and patient waiting until their cry was heard of him who knew their sorrows and saw their affliction. In the time of deep distress they were led to make the fervent, effectual prayer. Deliverance came, and with a mighty hand and strong arm they were saved from the power of their enemies, who

were destroyed in their zeal to overcome and keep them still in bondage.

The Israelites were indeed an afflicted and powerless people until the Lord said to Moses: "Behold the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me, and I have seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people out of Egypt. The Lord heard their fervent prayer, and Pharaoh and his host could oppress them no more. They were no more powerless, no more subject to the dominion of Egypt when "God heard their groaning and remembered his covanent with their fathers, and had respect unto them." They could go forth out of Egypt, and walk through the Red Sea on dry ground, the waters thereof standing as a wall on either side. They could look upon the symbol of the divine presence in the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, and rest in quiet security, in the midst of a vast desert wilderness. They could bring water out of the rock, and every morning gather their daily bread, which during the night fell from heaven round about their tents. These, and other mighty works that were necessary for their safety and support, God wrought out for them, because his protection and his blessings were promised to them and to their children. Indeed, when they were "faithful and obedient," they could do whatever they desired, and no good promise was withheld from them.

A more glorious dispensation and better promises

than were given to the Israelites, are the inheritance of the Christian Church. She is called to do greater works and to enjoy richer blessings than ancient Israel attained. Their spiritual privileges and mighty works "were but the shadow of good things to come," and when the precious promises given to the Church of Christ are fulfilled in her, her character and works will be far more excellent and glorious than theirs.

The Prince of darkness and the children of the world, like Pharaoh and his host, seem to have dominion over spiritual Israel. They are, as it were, servants held in subjection under the rulers of the darkness of this world, and too weak and powerless to escape its pollutions, and come up and possess the heavenly places prepared for them. Many separate parties and conflicting opinions are called orthodox; and the humble disciples of Jesus are as it were, buried among them all. The children of God are not visibly united in one body, but are accidentally separated by various circumstances, and united with strangers. What can the Christian Church do when broken into many separate divisions; and truth, order, and love, are found, as we might find the fragments of a broken vessel, cast away out of sight, being almost worthless in their fragmentary state. Among the great multitude professing Christianity there is not that cohesive attraction that makes them unite and mingle into one. Opposing elements are brought in contact. Principles and doctrines that cannot agree, are embraced in one common confes-

sion of faith, and those called Christians are held together as such, by something else than the love of God shed abroad in the heart.

It cannot be that discord or aversion divides the living members of our Lord's body, for they are baptized into one spirit, and being made partakers of the same grace, they love as brethren. They may be separate from and opposed to the spirit and doctrines of the world, but how can the members of Christ be divided or opposed to each other, when it is the mind and spirit of Christ, (who is not divided,) that quickens and leads each particular member of his own body. Being in Christ, or having the mind of Christ, is that which constitutes a Christian, and this is that which produces the resemblance and the unity of the children of God. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

CHRISTIAN UNION.

The disciples of Christ are separated from the world by the holy Word, and spirit of truth, dwelling in them. They are united in their interests and their affections, by the immutable principles of truth and love; and the strength of their union is according to the measure of grace and truth they enjoy. They love one another with the same purity and affection, though not in an equal degree, as they love God, and love his commandments. The Spirit of

Christ is the powerful interior attraction that draws and holds them together as one. Herein we have the testimony of our conscience, and the witness of the Spirit, that we belong to Christ; and without this we have the surest evidence that we are not the Lord's, and that we have no spiritual union or connection with his members.

Creeds and rules of discipline have been invented for the purpose of harmonizing and binding together individuals of the same denomination, but these outward restraints and obligations do not, and cannot produce uniformity of character and harmony of action. And although this or that confession of faith may be like a division line, separating one sect or party from all others, yet even these are not always agreed among themselves. Those who profess the same doctrines, and agree to walk by the same rule, are not always baptized into one spirit, nor do they more than others, know or enjoy the communion that exists among the saints. Men may do what they will, and they cannot unite or add one member to the body of Christ; or they may do what they will, and they cannot give any individual the right or privilege of fellowship with Christians. And more than this, men may do what they will, and they cannot disunite or cut off from the body of Christ one of his members. The Lord knoweth them that are his, though men may not know them, and they are one in Christ, though human wisdom and the doctrines of men have separated them. Even now God is their Father, and Christ is in them of a

truth, and all that he hath is theirs. In a little while they shall know the things that are freely given them of God, and their Father's name shall be in their foreheads, and their unity and family resemblance shall be manifest as the sun at noon-day.

No learned profession, nor any company of associated individuals, however excellent and honorable their calling, can do such works, or be like those who are indeed the children of God. These are chosen instruments in the hand of the great Master and Lord of all things, who will empower and employ his own faithful servants in doing what human wisdom and strength cannot accomplish. The Lord can do what he will with his own, and he will now, as in ages past, and far more abundantly, glorify himself in working in and with them that "wholly follow him," so that all shall "know it is the Lord," and "know their works are wrought in God." Our Lord said, "If any man serve me, him will my Father honor;" and inasmuch as the servants of God are honored of him, they are honored of angels and of men. Inasmuch as the servants of Christ are in *all things* subject to him, *all things* are subject to them; and inasmuch as they learn of Jesus, and are like him, the wisdom and power of God are manifested in them.

"Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." "Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down,

O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Blessed day when the children and servants of the great King return to their Father's house, and renouncing their allegiance with foreigners, wander no more from their privileges and from their God.

CHAPTER XVIII.

God the moving Cause of every Right Action—Passive Obedience necessary—The Soul created to live and move in God.

"A MAN can receive nothing except it be given him from above." In this incipient, imperfect state, he can do nothing until his work be prepared, and he be directed therein. The soul that is faithful, may be compared to a body of pure water, which receives without resistance the rays of light that fall upon it, and without resistance moves, as it is acted upon by the gentle or strong gale passing over it. But when the sun retires and the air is still, it lies dark and motionless, being void of light or action, until the sun appears, and the wind or some external force moves it again.

Even so the soul must not only receive the light, and act in obedience to the operations of the Spirit, but when these are withheld, lie still in passive quietness, waiting only upon God. In the lonely and

solemn hour, when the soul lies dark and motionless, unable to know or do any thing, it is no less valuable, no less precious in the sight of its Maker, than when employed by him in doing great things. The excellence and perfection of the instruments consists in being prepared and ready to do whatever may be the good pleasure of the Master to accomplish with it. It is not necessary that the soul be pleased with itself, but only necessary that God be pleased with it, and the soul itself pleased with God, and with whatever he does with it. Whatever its motions or state may be, all is good and profitable if Providence have brought it there; and whatever the position or acts of the soul may be, all is wrong if its motions originate within and of itself.

The Father of our spirits created moral beings that he might serve and glorify himself with them. They were not created with the power of self-preservation or of self-control. The Maker of mind possesses in himself alone the principles of life and action that must regulate and govern every inferior mind. The creature was not created to live separate from the Creator, but to live and move and have its being in him. The natural, selfish mind, as it exists and acts without God, is evil, and only evil, continually. It cannot have or know any good only as it is given from above. Hence the soul cannot be in a state of safety or peace, only as it is waiting upon God and receiving continual supplies from him. God is where mind and spirit are, and every passing thought and secret thing is open and manifest in his

presence. He moves upon the heart, and sheds abroad the inspirations of his spirit there, when the soul is unconscious of his presence, and knows not it is in audience with its Maker.

The operations of the Spirit are deeply interior, and are not the subject of direct or sensible observation. They produce in the soul a new life or cause of action, bringing the thoughts and desires into subjection to the obedience of Christ. The outward man must perish, and the inward man be renewed in the image of him who worketh in us to subdue all things to himself. Regeneration is the effect of an invisible and mighty cause, operating within and round about us, in a manner we cannot understand, until we are made partakers of the divine nature, and see and know as we are seen and known. In our present state of darkness and obscurity, we are made to hope for that we see not, and required to believe what we cannot comprehend.

The great Atoning Sacrifice procures for every creature the gift of the Holy Spirit, to work in and with the soul that which is necessary to salvation. There is nothing better, nothing more necessary, than that we give ourselves up to be quickened and employed by his ever present, all pervading Spirit. God is always with us, and "the perfection of our state consists in giving way by our acquiescence and submission, for him to exercise all his rights and powers over us." We should at all times manifest and prove our acceptance of his will, by choosing rather to perform his pleasure, than that he should

fulfill ours. When we come to him we should pray that we might enter into, and accomplish his purposes, and that our desires and interests might be lost in his. We should feel and acknowledge our acceptance of his will, not praying him to condescend to ours. Our Father will do more and better for his children than to yield to their desires and accomplish their wishes. He will invite them to himself, and give them to know and enjoy him.

We should therefore be quiet and resigned when our expectations perish, for though we are disappointed, the will of God is done, and we are humbled, and this is the greatest good. It becomes us to be submissive and thankful when our good intentions and best efforts seem to work against us, and operate so as to prevent the good we designed to accomplish by them. Herein we learn that our wisdom is folly, and that of ourselves we can do nothing; and this lesson is worth more than success would have been. We may have, and may do many things, but we may not have our own will to lead us, nor our own wisdom to trust in; but instead of these, we may have the will of God, and the wisdom that comes from above. Having these, the greatest loss will be a greater gain, and failures and disappointments are the occasions of our victories. In being overcome, we triumph, and in losing all, we gain the supreme good. Blessed are they who have nothing, save that which they receive from above; who rejoice in losing their own things, that they may receive the things of God. These being per-

fectly submissive and obedient, all things are subject to them. They receive that which is given them from above, and desire nothing else. They cannot lack any good thing, because that which they have, and the abscence of that which they have not, is their greatest good. They have learned not to demand or refuse any thing from the hand of their Maker, but to follow his order and live in his providence. They receive chastisement and reproof without resistance or complaint, because it is God and not men with whom they have to do. They labor and have intercourse with their fellow-creatures, but the Creator is more present than they, and in his presence they do what they do with the simple intention to please him. His approbation and his blessing are their riches and support; with these they are satisfied and want no more, though destitute of all else. The present state is not their home nor their rest, but their place of labor and trial. They abide in him who says, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world;" and being strengthened by his grace, they endure to the end, and enter into his kingdom and glory.

O my soul, what hast thou received, and what are thy state and prospects. Thou hast heard a voice in secret places, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Thou hast received the truth that is able to make thee wise unto salvation, and these many years thou hast been learning the duties and privileges of the children of God, but thou hast not yet fully embraced them. Thou art in a state of trial, and thy

warfare is often grievous to thee. Thou art more willing to be the conqueror than the warrior. Thou dost think much of victory and continual triumph, but thou art weak and easily discouraged when called to fight. Thou wouldst be free and at rest before the battle is ended, and because the trial is long and the conflict severe, thou art often ready to complain. Thou wouldst be always rejoicing, and strong to overcome, without suffering under the cross. Thou dost often forget "the life of man is a warfare upon earth," and forget that thy daily business here is to watch and pray lest thou enter into temptation. Were it possible, thou wouldst have the enemy retire, and thus avoid every engagement without being exposed to the dangers of wrestling against spiritual wickedness in high places. But this cannot be, the warfare and the cross are as necessary and certain as the victory.

"Sure I must fight if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord;
I'll bear the cross, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word."

The Word of God is the refuge and support of them that trust in him. His holy Word is a medium of direct communication through which we receive the things that are given us from above. The "light" also "that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," is sufficient to reveal these things, and to make us wise unto salvation. The true riches, the only blessed portion of the soul, consists in knowing

and receiving the things that are freely given us of God. Having these things, we shall not be afraid though enemies are many and strong. No weapon formed against the righteous shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise up in judgment against the truth, they shall condemn, for the Lord is with them to fulfill his pleasure, and accomplish his word.

THE LORD'S CONTROVERSY WITH HIS PEOPLE.

The Lord has a controversy with his people, and in this day of his displeasure and rebuke, who can stand before him and plead for Zion. He has seen our backslidings, and known our iniquities. The pride and unbelief of the Church are manifest in his sight, and he cannot be reconciled to our sins, nor restore unto us the joys of his salvation, while we are wickedly departing from his commandments. He will give grace for grace to them that fear him and walk in the truth, and he will take away his spirit and his blessing from them that love to do evil, and walk in darkness. Mercy and truth are promised to the humble and the penitent, and judgments are prepared for the rebellious. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne," and a wicked and adulterous people cannot escape punishment.

The Church has loved the world and become like it. She is united in fellowship and affection with the enemies of holiness, and is more willing to depart from the holy commandments than to come out and be separate from the friendship and customs

of the world. She is joined to the idols she has chosen, and because temporal prosperity and the favors of a wicked world are being given her, she believes she is rich and has need of nothing. These are her treasures, and having these, she reckons herself rich towards God, and accepts and enjoys her portion as an evidence of his love and special favor. Her delusion is strong, and she believes what is not true, and therefore will not receive instruction nor reproof. Her Maker is her husband, but she has left her first love, and is married to the world, and her divine character and spiritual strength have departed from her. The enemies of truth and holiness are her friends, and being joined hand in hand with the wicked, she is wandering on forbidden ground, and receiving and enjoying the favors and friendship of the God of this world. The holy displeasure of her Lord and Master is manifest in all her borders, but her deeds being evil, she will not come to the light, lest her character be reproved and exposed. Her Redeemer has withdrawn his smiles and the inspirations of his spirit from her congregations, and they have ceased to be the solemn assemblies of the faithful. Even on the holy Sabbath day, when his people are convened in the sanctuary, his glorious presence and power to cleanse from all unrighteousness is not manifest in their midst; and like the door on its hinges, they come and go, and yet continue in their sins. We have wandered far from the privileges of a holy people, and are left to be "at ease in Zion," and to say, "peace, peace," when there are

many reasons why we should be fearfully alarmed with apprehensions of "sudden destruction." In these things the divine displeasure is manifest, and this state of things is in itself both the sign and the expression of the severest judgments.

Blind and selfish mortals often deceive themselves in those things wherein they are willing to be deceived. We naturally love and seek after worldly prosperity, and when this is our portion, we are apt to reckon ourselves the objects of the divine favor, and because we enjoy a measure of happiness, we conclude the Giver of our mercies is well pleased with us, and we receive temporal blessings as an expression of his complacency and peculiar regard. But we have not so learned Christ, neither are we taught by his word that earthly prosperity is an evidence of our acceptance with him. The rich man who fared sumptuously every day was not the subject of great spiritual blessings, but in his prosperity he was making his bed in hell, and when he had enjoyed his portion a while he went to his own place. The beggar who lay at his gate was an object of the divine compassion, and highly favored of God, and while he was asking for the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, he was being prepared to be carried by angels into Abraham's bosom.

If earthly prosperity and the friendship of the world were an evidence of the divine favor, and of a holy and spiritual state, the Church would have reason to say she is rich toward God, and increased in spiritual gifts, and has need of nothing. But the

life and spirit of the blessed Jesus, the example and preaching of the holy apostles, teach us another lesson; from which we learn that the disciples of Christ, or the true Church on earth, cannot enjoy the friendship and favors of a wicked world; but these are those who are coming up through much tribulation, and who are persecuted and hated by the enemies of God. There can be no fellowship between the body of Christ and the kingdom of darkness, and his members cannot reckon themselves the friends of the world, and the subjects of worldly prosperity, and at the same time reckon themselves "dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God."

The great Head of the Church will be acknowledged and sought unto as the only, and all-sufficient portion of his people. He does not permit them to love the world, or desire to enjoy its best things. He will have them separate from earthly vanities, and their whole heart free to worship him in spirit and in truth. Other Lords may not have dominion over them, for they belong to him alone, and he demands their unreserved obedience, and their undivided affections, and will in no wise relinquish his claims. The Holy Spirit strives and contends for the rights and claims of the Father, until all his gracious influences and gentle admonitions are effectually resisted, and the hour has come when these words must be fulfilled: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man;" and, "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone."

CHAPTER XIX.

Conditions of the Gospel Covenant—No Inferior Authority necessary to enforce Obedience to the Divine Law written in the Heart.

NATURE AND EFFECTS OF THE LAW OF GOD WRITTEN IN THE HEART.

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days saith the Lord. I will put my laws into their mind; and will write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."

Since Christ appeared in the world, and God was manifest in the flesh, his laws are no more written on tables of stone, but on fleshly tables of the heart. They are no more deposited in the ark, and placed within the vail in the holy place, but they are written in the conscience and exhibited in a holy life and heavenly conversation, where they may be known and read of all men. The knowledge and love of God are shed abroad in the hearts of his

people by "the holy Ghost which is given to all them that obey him."

Laws written on tables of stone, or written on paper by the hands of men, are dead and powerless. But the words and commands of God written in the soul, are spirit and life, and there is power in them to bring into subjection, and power to enforce obedience. Their sufficiency is not of men but of God, whose spirit is in the truth written in the heart. The laws and the counsel which are of God, need not the help of the foolish wisdom of men, or of the puny arm of civil law, to establish their authority, or to aid in their execution. They are able to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; or they are able to subdue and destroy whatever will resist their holy requisitions. That which is opposed to the knowledge and love of God must be consumed and banished from the heart, when his laws are written there. Covetousness, which is idolatry, envy, the love of the world with all uncharitableness, must be blotted out when the principles of truth and holiness are put in the mind.

They that have learned of Jesus and have his commandments, will avoid the appearance of evil, not from constraint or of necessity, but because they feel aversion to every thing that is contrary to the laws written in their hearts. It is their pleasure to deal justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly before God; and they cannot do otherwise, because they love his commandments, and know and feel that

obedience to every divine precept is their highest duty and privilege.

The law of maternal affection is written in the mother's heart, therefore legal decisions are unnecessary to persuade or compel her to take care of her infant children. She loves to do it, and will rather suffer than leave this duty undone. The law in her heart sweetly inclines every voluntary power of her mind to nourish and protect her helpless infant. There might be civil obligations imposed on parents to constrain them to provide for their helpless offspring, but the necessity or the execution of such legal enactments would prove the absence of the law written in the heart. The law of God requires children to honor and obey their parents, and if this law be written in their hearts, it need not be written any where else. The constraining principle of obedience is within, and the law of filial affection governs the child, without the influence of promises, punishments or rewards.

The commands and precepts of the divine word being written in the heart, they naturally and necessarily produce a holy life and blameless conversation. The wisdom and authority of the divine law are supreme, where they are felt and understood, and no subordinate law, no inferior authority are necessary to ensure obedience; and, indeed, it is not possible in the nature of things, that human wisdom or power can add strength or efficiency to the law of God. When his laws are written in the heart, that soul will obey God rather than men, and indeed

will rather disobey all men than deviate from the least commandment.

The children of God under the gospel dispensation are embraced in the new covenant, established on the promise, "I will put my laws in their inward parts, and in their mind will I write them." The power and spirit of these laws operating within, are sufficient to "bring every thought into subjection to the obedience of Chirst." Herein the soul is taught of God and receives and enjoys the substance of that divine knowledge implied in these words: "But the annointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same annointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

Inasmuch as civil laws and social or benevolent institutions originate in, or are authorized by the Word of God, Christians are faithful to observe their claims, not because men approve or require their observance, but because their original, the pure word is written in their hearts, whereby they are taught and inclined to do those things that are true and just, and of good report. The only true basis of spiritual knowledge, and the only true principles of acceptable obedience are comprehended in this blessed promise, "I will put my laws in their inward parts, and in their mind will I write them." Herein Christians are taught by the inspirations of truth and a good conscience to live by every word of God,

and his words written in their hearts are the only authority they acknowledge or consent to obey.

The natural heart does not love nor obey the laws of God. Its nature and choice are to love and do those things that are contrary to his commandments. The power and influence of his laws are round about, but not within the unrenewed soul; and hence powerful external influences are employed to persuade men to practice what is right. Civil laws are enacted, associations are formed, rules and promises subscribed to, in order to constrain men to obey the truth and do as they ought. These outward regulations are expedient and doubtless authorized by the Word of God, but enlightened Christians are not governed by them. The basis or cause of every right action exists and operates within the renewed soul, and procures obedience without the aid of external or selfish motives. Worldly men must be governed by worldly principles. They can appreciate no other, but Christians do not require and can not be governed by the same motives that worldly men are. The spirit of truth and a good conscience are sufficient; and these alone will inspire and regulate the motives and conduct of those who learn of Christ and are like him. Hence it cannot be necessary or profitable for the children of God to endeavor to strengthen themselves or each other in the performance of duty, by any other considerations than those drawn directly from his Word. Dollars and cents, worldly policy, and public opinion, involve principles of action that may and must govern men

of corrupt minds; and indeed when no higher considerations can prevail, it is doubtless expedient and profitable to employ these selfish and external influences to persuade men to practice the form of doing right.

Civil authority, the creeds and disciplinary rules of Churches, and many other corrective and restraining regulations, are designed and adapted to prevent the outward expression of error and crime, and the great moral Governor makes use of these controling influences in preventing his creatures from destroying themselves and each other. These powerful restraints are necessary and useful, and for the same cause also the walls of our State Prisons are necessary and profitable. They prevent the commission of crime, and keep the most desperate spirits orderly and harmless. But though good men build and employ these walls for this purpose, they do not value nor approve the motives or principles of action that govern the conduct of those who are confined within them, and who are made obedient and industrious by the restrictions imposed on them. True these men submit to do right, they injure no one, nor refuse to perform the labors assigned them, and yet they have as little reason to boast of their virtue and faithfulness as they have to expect any reward for it. Instead of deserving wages for their service, they are wholly indebted for the amount of their usefulness to the authority that compels them to labor and act as they do. The procuring cause of their good works is not in them, but in the walls

and keepers who guard them. If these were removed, their virtue and faithfulness would go with them, and they would soon prove that laws of evil and not of good, were written in their hearts.

The restraints thrown round about society, the time and expense required to secure order and peace, do not prove how virtuous and faithful its members are, but rather how much must be done to make them so. These restrictions would be unnecessary, and as it were, a dead letter, if the Word of God and the dictates of an enlightened conscience were the guide, and the authority which every individual acknowledged and loved to obey. "The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," but when the soul is renewed and his laws put in the mind, his commandments are not grievous, and from a fixed principle within we will keep them because we love what is just and good.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

The more I know and love God the more exceedingly sinful does sin appear. I can but abhor myself when I feel the motions of sin working in me, and am filled with shame and confusion before God and man on account of my lost estate as a sinner. In those seasons, when temptation or the spirit of truth make me feel and know the darkness and frailty of my own soul, I turn from myself with amazement and horror. This is my affliction that I am so far estranged from God, and am no more like him, whom I profess to serve and worship. It is

strange I am not more grievously afflicted and more deeply penitent, while my heart is capable of forgetting God one moment, or of being careless or slothful in His presence. Truly my unbelief and hardness of heart have reduced me very low, and I blush and am ashamed to lift up my prayer because my state is what it is.

But Jesus died to save sinners, and he will save me, even the chief. Though I hate myself, I believe he loves, and though I see myself more and more vile, yet every moment, still believe my soul is being saved. Some years ago I began to repent and believe in Christ for salvation, and since that time have been learning that salvation is a great and good work; the first and last, and only necessary business of this short life. Any thing else may be left undone, but if this be neglected, life and all its labors end in ruin.

The invitations and promises of the gospel are given for lost sinners, and sinners may believe and rejoice in them. "Christ is made unto us wisdom, sanctification and redemption." "Because he lives, we live also." By faith we receive and hold him in our hearts. "He receiveth sinners and eateth with them." He is the sinner's friend, the sinner's salvation. He came from heaven for this purpose, that he might take away our sins, and he finished the work that was given him to do. "He hath borne the iniquities of us all, and by his stripes we are healed." "Our life is hid with Christ in God," "and when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we

also appear with him in glory." Truly our life is hid, and we live by faith until our life is revealed, and then shall we see him as he is, and be like him. At present we groan, being burdened; and Zion seems to be as it were in an embryo state, and her children traveling in pain together, waiting for a more perfect and glorious revelation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly and manifest thyself to thy disciples, that they may be where thou art, and behold thy glory." Appear in the midst of Zion as a refiner and purifier of silver, and take away the reproach of thy people. Bring them out of the wilderness, and build again and establish Jerusalem according to thy word.

CHAPTER XX.

Zion in the Wilderness—Prophecy and Promise reveal another and better State—The Members of Christ the Habitation of God through the Spirit—Our Lord's Prayer for His Disciples.

UNITY OF THE MEMBERS OF CHRIST.

The body of Christ is composed of many members, and there seems to be a real and permanent connection and intercourse existing among them which is invisible and cannot be defined. By virtue of this relation, every particular member, according to his measure of the gift of Christ, is a partaker of the spiritual consolations and sufferings of the whole body. And from this mutual fellowship of joy and sorrow, no member desires to be exempted. For this cause I groan, being burdened, or rather *we* groan, not that one member might be holy and happy, but that every member of Christ might be made every whit whole. We are afflicted with our infirmities, and bear each other's burdens, and hope and

believe we shall be partakers of the blessings of the great salvation that shall be revealed in us, when the measure of our Lord's sufferings are filled up. At present, we need and must have an increase of faith and patience to wait for the perfecting of the saints, for the glory that shall be revealed, not to, but *in* us when Christ comes to be admired *in* all them that believe. Come Lord Jesus, and come quickly; build again thy unfinished, desolate temple, and acknowledge and claim it for thy dwelling-place from henceforth. Let no unclean thing abide within its sacred walls, and no stranger pass through its gates any more.

Until Zion be redeemed from her iniquities, and be acknowledged and blessed of God according to his word, we may not, and will not rest nor be silent. The great and precious promises are before us, and we will not cease to labor and strive until with every member of Christ we come into that state in which they are fulfilled in us. We know that Christ is our present all-sufficient Saviour, and our treasure is in heaven, and our inheritance among all them that are sanctified. But now our place is in the wilderness among strangers, and our privileges are not the privileges of a home in our Father's house and with our Father's children.

The sure word of prophecy and of promise reveal another and better state, and the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads. And why not *now*. Wherein is the necessity of remaining in

Egypt another year, or of wandering in the wilderness any longer, when our Prophet, Priest and King is in the midst of us, and we know it is His good pleasure to give us the Kingdom. Do Christians know indeed that Christ is in them of a truth. Do we know he has said "all I have is thine." Do we know "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Do we know all things are possible to him that believeth, and whatsoever things we desire when we pray, do we believe that we receive them.

The name Immanuel signifies and describes the character and state of the Christian: "God with us." The body of believers are the habitation of God through the Spirit; "His house;" "His temple;" "Members of Christ's body," and members one of another. Happy people who are thus highly favored of God; "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Remember that holy name by which ye are called, and know that as he is, so are we in this world. Blessed hope. The morning Star has risen in our hearts, and some faint rays from the Sun of Righteousness have dawned upon us. These make the darkness visible and quicken us to pray and wait for the perfect day. The full splendor of the Sun will soon appear too dazzling and bright for the eye of the sinner to behold it. When Moses came down from the Mount, the divinity shone with such lustre in his countenance, that the children of Israel prayed him to put a vail over his face that they might talk with

him. And when our Lord on the Mount showed his disciples of his coming and kingdom, his face did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as the light, and when they saw Moses and Elias talking with him and were eye-witnesses of his majesty, they were sore afraid, and fell on their faces.

Truly it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. No man hath seen God at any time, but he is declared and made manifest through his Son, who took upon him our nature and became like one of us, that we might be one with him. Even now we are quickened and made more alive to God in beholding, as through a glass darkly, his image in our brother whom we have seen. The members of Christ are a savor of Christ because they abide in him and he in them. They reflect his image, and hence are called the light of the world.

The prayer of our blessed Lord, and also every promise and every command are, or wait to be perfectly fulfilled in the experience and life of the saints. The words of our Saviour are not empty sounds, "but they are spirit and they are life," and will endure forever. Not one of them shall pass away till all be fulfilled. Our Lord prayed for his immediate disciples and for us on this wise: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they all may be one; as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory

which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for thou lovedest me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them."

Our Lord and Saviour came into the world that he might be revealed *in* us, the life of our life, the inspirer of our prayer, the author and finisher of our faith. He came not as a transient visitor to give his counsel and commands, but he came to be Immanuel; to abide in us and with us forever, even as he said, "Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world." He appeared in the flesh that we might come where he was, and receive him into our hearts, and never more be separated from him. He finished the work that was given him to do, and now all he has promised, and all his good pleasure concerning his disciples wait to be fulfilled and finished in all them that believe. O my Lord, what wait we for, our hope is in thee. Thou art the inspirer of our prayer, and we pray for thy coming and kingdom. Thou art the finisher of our faith, and we

believe thy coming and kingdom are near at hand. Be thou in us, and with us from henceforth, and save us from the power of our enemies, and give us to know we are thy people and thou art our God.

The disciples of Jesus are not of the world, but as our Lord was in the world so are they in the world; and as he suffered, was tempted, crucified and received up into heaven, so likewise his members drink of the same cup and are baptized with the same baptism he was baptized with. He was himself the example we should follow, not by imitation in outward appearance, but as he was, so we should be in the world. His humiliation, his reproach, his crucifixion and his cross he gave to his disciples, and the glory that was given him he gave to them also, and said, "the works that I do shall ye do also, and greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to the Father."

Since his ascension, our Lord's bodily presence has not been visible on earth as it was in the days of his incarnation, but in spirit he has never separated himself from his disciples, nor left them alone in the world; but since a cloud received him out of their sight, their fellowship and union with him have been more real and perfect than it were possible to have been before. It was expedient for us that he went away, for if he had not gone away he would not have sent the Comforter in his name, to testify of the Father and the Son, and to lead us into all truth. True, the visible, that which was earthly, has disappeared, but the flesh profiteth nothing, the

spirit and life are the substance, and these abide with us in measure more abundant since the visible disappeared.

The children of God from the beginning till the end of the Christian dispensation, are as branches growing out of one parent vine; all deriving life, spirit and fruit from one common source, and all possessing the same vital principle of thought and action, being quickened and kept alive by the same invisible, hidden life, and that life the life of Christ in the soul. They have lived in different ages and distant nations, but all baptized into one spirit, even the spirit of Christ. They are all parts of one whole, united by one indwelling spirit in a manner at present unknown and at present impossible for us to understand; all being mutually dependent upon, and profitable to each other. "There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is *above all* and *through all*, and *in you all*. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

Our great Exemplar was seen and known of men in the form of a feeble, helpless babe. He passed hrough the natural period of infancy, youth and

middle age, increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. He was subject to his parents, and was not acknowledged or declared to be the Son of God with power, until his resurrection from the dead. The divinity dwelt within him, and he was the visible manifestation of the Father's presence and glory on earth, yet he was the servant of all, and sometimes weary in his labors, and hungry and afflicted. And even after he had confessed himself to his disciples, and had done many wonderful and mighty works, he said "of mine own self I can do nothing." "The Church which is his body," "the habitation of his spirit," "the fullness of him who filleth all in all," can only follow him, and be as he was in the world. It is enough for the Members that they be as their Head, and enough that all that he hath is theirs. He was indeed the Son of God, the only beloved of the Father, the Heir of all things, and the dominion and glory of the kingdoms of this world were given to him. But he appeared not so in the flesh, and when we saw him, we saw no riches or beauty that we should desire him. The world perceived not nor understood his union with the Father, and the supreme excellence and glory of his divine character were concealed within himself and hid from observation. He was therefore "despised and rejected of men," and "we did esteem him smitten of God and afflicted."

Even so the members of Christ are as he was in the world. They are indeed the sons of God and joint heirs with Christ, and the kingdom and domin-

ion belong to them, but as yet we see not their divine character and holy calling, but we see them in their humiliation, bearing the cross, and we see no form or comeliness that we should desire them. We see them chastened and humbled on account of their sins, and we perceive not their sonship and adoption into the family of heaven. Their union and fellowship with the Father and the Son are not manifest to the world, and in this time of their humiliation and reproach, it does not appear what they are or shall be. They are strangers among men and as the world discerned not, nor acknowledged the divinity and sonship of their living Head, so we discern not nor acknowledge his members. Where and who are the members of Christ? Where is the temple of God—the habitation of his spirit? The apostle in writing "to the Church of God at Corinth, and to all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours," said, "Know ye not ye are the temple of God, and the spirit of God dwelleth in you."

But now the "living stones" that compose this heavenly building, are, as it were, "out of sight," being buried among the ruins of doctrines and forms of "dead works." They are somewhere scattered abroad in the world, but the world do not know them, neither do they clearly discern or recognize each other. The image and life of Christ which lives in them, seems to be "hid from observation," and hence we learn what they are, and what they shall be, from the Word of God, and not from what

we observe in them. Were it not so, we should discern and know them, because we should see in them the image of Christ. We should verily see in them more than Simeon and Anna saw in the child Jesus; we should see the image of Christ after he had increased in wisdom and stature, and should discern in their character what our Lord expressed when he said, "I am the light of the world." The apostles said, we are "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made *manifest* in our body;" also, again, "For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made *manifest* in our mortal flesh." Perhaps it might be written the body of Christ is always delivered up to follow him and be as he was through all the periods of his incarnation, from his birth in the manger till his ascension from the Mount.

For a season our Lord could do only the works of a babe. For a time he was subject to his parents, and the wisdom and ability of a child were manifest in him. He increased in wisdom and stature, and grew up into a perfect man, and more and greater works were wrought by him. In the last days of his incarnation, he entered into his last visible conflict with the powers of darkness, in which he triumphed over his enemies, and over the grave, and was declared to be the Son of God with power. He was glorified on earth in the sight of angels and men, and earth and hell were made to know and feel

the power and presence of God in the crucified Nazarene. He ascended up where he was before, to prepare a place for us. He ever lives at the right hand of the Father, and because he lives we live also. We live because he lives in us, and we in him. Our glorified heavenly life is hid with Christ in God, and the dying, cross-bearing life of Jesus are manifest in our mortal body, that, like the apostle, "we may know him and the power of his resurrection, being made conformable unto his death."

The members of Christ are chosen and gathered, not only from every generation, but also from every nation that have lived on earth; and all these are one body, one building or Church. "Christ revealed in the heart," or "being born of God," is the *way*—the *door* into this heavenly building, wherein nothing unsanctified or unclean can come. "The temple of God is holy," and let men say and believe what they will, the spirit of truth by the mouth of the apostle, says, "the temple of God is holy which temple ye are." The members or living stones chosen and employed in building up this holy habitation, are altogether united in *one*—united by the ever-present indwelling spirit of Him "who is above all, and through *all*, and in you all." The same all-pervading spirit of holiness works in every particular member, whereby we are enabled to "grow up into Christ in all things;" "Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

As yet the members or body of Christ have not attained the wisdom and stature of a perfect man; or have not attained the perfection of the man Christ Jesus as he was when "he ascended up on high and led captivity captive." But now they seem to be partakers of Christ as he was when he was oppressed and afflicted and delivered up into the hands of men. They seem to be following their great Exemplar near the period of his last conflict with the powers of darkness, and to draw near the fulfillment of his last prayer for his disciples. They seem to be growing up into Christ, and to partake of his spirit as he was when he said, "now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him." Jesus spake these words about the time he was betrayed and given up to be crucified. In this hour our Lord appeared to be overcome, and the powers of darkness seemed to prevail. He was silent before his accusers, and his divine character, his power and authority, were no protection or defence against the enmity and hatred of wicked men. In this hour, the subjects of the prince of darkness verily believed that Jesus of Nazareth was destroyed from the earth, and that his holy life and doctrines would testify against them no more. But in this same hour Jesus was glorified, and the power and dominion were now being given him; and in this same hour when darkness seemed to prevail, the morning light of a new and more glorious dispensation began to shine on the earth.

Even now, in these days, the faithful and true

witnesses for Jesus seem to be almost silent and powerless before the rulers of the darkness of this world. They are not visibly a separate, united, and peculiar people on earth; and hence are not distinguished as the children of God. They are crucified with Christ, and their dead body, is, as it were, laid in the grave, and the chief priests and pharisees have authority from Pilate to make the sepulchre sure as they can, that his disciples may not by any means be able to say, "He is risen from the dead." They seem to bear about in their bodies, not only the dying but also the death of the Lord Jesus, and though they have power with God, and his Word which testifies of these things is now being fulfilled in them, yet the world are not afraid to reject their testimony and destroy their influence and authority in the sight of men. The enemy has taken possession of "their heavenly places," and their holy and peculiar privileges are as profane and common things. In their humiliation, their judgement is taken away, and they are called to yield themselves up to God, and meekly submit to the powers that govern the kingdoms of this world, until they fully attain the spirit and fullness of Christ as he was in his last sufferings and death on the cross. Then they will be prepared to be glorified together with him; and prepared to understand and receive the fulfillment of our Lord's last prayer for his disciples. "That they all may be one; as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. And the glory which thou gavest me I have

given them; that they may be one even as we are one; I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

CHAPTER XXI.

The Kingdoms of this World under the dominion of the common Enemy—The Present a time of Warfare—The Army of Prince Immanuel may not employ Earthly or Carnal Weapons in their defence—These belong to the Enemy—Their only strength of defence in God—The Church destitute and powerless when strengthened and made rich by the World—Salvation of the Righteous, of the Lord.

THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD UNDER THE DOMINION OF THE COMMON EMEMY.

The Lord reigns, but as yet the kingdoms of this world are not taken from the dominion of the common enemy and given to our Lord Jesus Christ and his saints. If the kingdoms of this world had become the kingdoms of our Lord, his subjects might now possess and enjoy every good thing, and the wickedness of the wicked could afflict them no more. But now the subjects of the great King are called to wrestle against principalities and powers, and required to put on the whole armour of righteousness

that they may be able to stand in this evil day. They are exposed to the dangers and privations of continual warfare, and cannot sit together in heavenly places in Christ, where the enemy cannot come.

The servants of Prince Immanuel have no home nor treasure here, and only because the Lord reigns, are they permitted to dwell in comparative safety and peace among their enemies, and to share with them the common blessings of life. It is not their privilege to claim these favors, for the warfare is not finished, and victory is not yet proclaimed. The Prince of darkness is permitted to hold in his possession, and employ for the benefit of his own subjects, the riches and honors of this world, and the children of the great King must consent to be poor and despised among men, until the saints take the kingdom, and the enemy is vanquished and driven to his own place. They may not claim nor expect help or favor from the world, for their success and prosperity are not from beneath. Their support and strength of defence are not in the treasures and wisdom of the world, hence they need them not in order to overcome. These things constitute the armory of their foes, and are given into the hands of those who trust in them. But the disciples of the Prince of peace, who live by faith, and are prepared to fight the battles of the Lord, may not defend themselves with earthly or carnal things.

The army of King Immanuel are called to leave their honorable titles and earthly possessions, and meet the prince of this world empty and destitute,

as was their Captain when he went from Pilate's bar to the judgment seat. This world's friendship, and its precious things, are not valuable or necessary for those who learn of Jesus and follow him. They are not dependent upon the wealth or favors of a wicked world to aid them in fighting the good fight of faith, and taking possession of the kingdom. They are, and must be like their divine Master, who would not employ in his service the wealth or friendship of the world, while he was subduing all things to himself. The riches and co-operation of wicked men were subject to his command if he had desired or needed their aid; but his kingdom was not of this world, and the world could do nothing either to establish or overthrow it.

When the disciples of Christ have learned of him to renounce the friendship and counsel of the children of this world, and learned to stand alone, having none but God and those who love and serve him for their friends and helpers; the last decisive conflict, and the great decisive victory is not far off, but near at hand. The children of God are wise indeed, when they have no wisdom but that which comes from above; and they are strong indeed when they have no strength but that which is of God. But while the professed disciples of Christ are amalgamated with the sons of belial, and trust in things earthly and things heavenly, and employ in their defence both spiritual and carnal weapons, they cannot take possession of the kingdom which even *now* it is their Father's good pleasure to give them.

The members of Christ are called to come out and be separate from the friendship and spirit of the world, and being joined to the Lord, abide always in him. "The Bride, the Lamb's wife," must be arrayed in linen, clean and white, and be free from any unholy intercourse or connection with the Lord's enemies. She must claim and receive her support and happiness by virtue of her relation to her Maker and her Husband, and not through her friendship and connection with the world. Her strength and glory consist in being chosen and accepted of God, and her poverty and ruin are made perfect in being honored and made rich by the world. Her Redeemer and Lord is well able to provide for his own; and when his own chosen and beloved people, love and trust in him alone, they can do all things through Christ strengthening them; and the kingdom and all that belongs to Christ are theirs.

"The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord," and his wisdom and strength are their present and sufficient help in every time of need. He can do with them whatever seemeth him good, and nothing more nor less can be done for them or against them than that which his providence directs or permits to be done. The children of God are wise and powerful according to their reliance upon his wisdom and power; and they are holy and happy according to their separation and distance from the wisdom and help of men. Noah and his family were alone, and were saved when the flood came upon the world of the ungodly. Daniel and his companions were cap-

tives in a strange land, but the envy and hatred of their enemies could not prevail against them. The immediate disciples of Christ were few in number, and the world were against them, but they obtained help of God, and their words and works have enlightened and blessed every succeeding generation. In all ages the righteous have obtained help of God, and the world have never put down those whom God would lift up. He is found of them who believe he is their sufficient help, and who desire no other helper, and when he is found and will be for them, who can be against them. How often have the multitude united their wisdom and strength to destroy the character and influence of one, or a few simple, defenceless individuals, and because the Lord was for them, none prevailed against them.

The faithful disciples of Jesus have no occasion to fear the rulers of the darkness of this world, because the power of the enemy is limited, and beyond his chain he cannot go. There is no lion or ravenous beast that can stand in the way of holiness and prevent the faithful from pressing onward therein until they take the kingdom. The great and exceeding precious promises are before them, even in their heart and in their mouth, and now in this day of salvation they may receive and enjoy their purchased inheritance. Let them be united as one in Christ and they are well able to displace the Canaanite and possess the promised land. Let them be disjoined from their idols, and they shall be joined to the Lord. Let them be separate from the world, and the

world shall not separate them from God. Nothing else than fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness can hold them in bondage to the elements of the world, or prevent them from coming into the perfect liberty wherewith Christ makes his servants free. They shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. They are called and chosen to enjoy this liberty, and when they know and confess the duties and privileges of their high calling, the Prince of darkness is under their feet, and the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

As the rays of light are scattered over the earth, and as they all meet in the sun from whence they emanate, and are never disjointed or separated from it; so the members of Christ are scattered abroad and are strangers on earth; yet are they joined to Christ, in whom they live, and from whom they cannot be disjoined and remain alive, any more than the rays of light can shine when broken off or separated from their source. The solar rays shine not, only when and where they emanate directly and instantly from the sun; and the members of Christ live not, only as they continually and directly receive light and life from him.

The children of God may be strangers in the flesh and separated by different degrees of knowledge and holiness; by various circumstances, and by a diversity of operations of the same Spirit; but they are one in Christ, and the same Prophet, Priest and King is perfectly acquainted with every one, and

rules in, and reigns over all. They are attracted, and revolve around one common centre, and that centre is the will of God. They are also enclosed and separated from the world by a wall great and high, and that wall of separation is the eternal and irreconcilable distinction that exists betweeen *light* and *darkness*.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

Truly I am one of the most ungrateful and worthless of beings. I cannot see or feel in my heart any good thing, only I have a view or perception of what goodness is, and can apprehend the inexpressible beauty and excellence of truth and holiness, and can desire and hope to attain unto it. But considering the weakness of my desires, and how feeble and inefficient my efforts to obtain what is more precious and desirable than can be expressed, I am compelled to reckon myself exceedingly vile. I am amazed at my slothfulness and stupidity, and cannot understand why it is that my thoughts and actions are no more spiritual and Christ-like. My convictions of sin, and desires to obtain a heavenly and spiritual mind, have for many years constrained me to be much on my knees in secret, and to search the Scriptures daily in order to learn what I should do to be saved. But notwithstanding these drawings of the Spirit, and the abundance of grace and truth bestowed upon me, I am as yet far, very far, from being what I should be; and in view of what has been done for my soul, and the poor returns I am able to

render for all these benefits, I can only plead the prayer of the publican, "be merciful to me a sinner."

I believe, and believe without wavering, it is our Father's good pleasure to make us like Christ—pure in heart and separate from sinners; and I cannot and will not rest till his pleasure be accomplished in me. My prayers and efforts are indeed feeble and imperfect, but the Holy Spirit, through the blessed Word, seems to commune with my spirit, and strengthen my faith to wait, and wait still upon God. I dare not pray for the removal of things grievous to me, nor ask for any special grace in other words than "thy will, not mine, be done." I ask to be saved from my sins, and created anew in Christ; and in order that this work be speedily accomplished, I desire to improve every moment of time, and perform every duty in such a manner that I shall not frustrate the grace of God working in me. I hope and rest only on the Word of God, all else is against me; indeed I am against myself, and if every one should censure and condemn me altogether, I can only plead guilty and without excuse.

I carry about a feeble and diseased body, and doubt not the soul is much affected and pressed down thereby; but considering it probable that my own personal transgressions have been the procuring cause of all my inward and outward affliction, I receive every kind of suffering as an evidence or remembrancer of my present or past sins; and therefore, instead of complaining, it becometh me to confess and be ashamed whenever I am afflicted. This

day, (November 19th, 1847,) I have lived forty years; and this day my heart is troubled, and fears are in my way, and my spiritual state is a burden I know not how to endure. I find within me more and greater evils than I have hitherto known, and from which I know not how to escape. My guilt has cost me days and nights of intense suffering, but my tears have made no restitution, nor washed away the least stain my sins have made. O that I had always been led by the spirit of truth which has attended me in the night watches, and followed me in secret places, and would have led me in the way of humble, diligent obedience. Then, long since my goings would have been established, and I should now be able to love his commandments, and keep them with my whole heart.

I am persuaded it is not good or profitable for any creature to desire any thing more, or any thing else than that which is intended in the will of God; and hence, my true and sincere prayer is, that the will of God may be done in me, and when I believe every thought and act of the mind are in subjection to the divine will, I can rejoice in my condition, whatever my state may be. I have learned and now perceive one great error in the experience of my past life. I have sought after heavenly and spiritual things, and greatly desired to enjoy the honor and peace that comes from God. I have labored diligently to secure his favor and his blessings; and truly my desires and efforts have not been in vain. I have found

and enjoyed much that I sought after, and many and precious blessings, both temporal and spiritual, have attended me in all my wanderings. But now it is given me to distinguish between the possession and enjoyment of the gifts of God, and the possession and enjoyment of the Giver himself. I learn the creature may receive much and be happy and well satisfied in the fullness and freeness of temporal and spiritual mercies, and yet be far, very far from that state in which every thought is brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ. I have been slow and unwilling to live in the will of God, and have been in haste to enjoy his blessings and live in his smiles. I have not so much waited upon God as I have waited for his gifts. I have waited for my own desires to be given me, when I should have been waiting for the will of God to be done, and have often been afflicted when the will of God *was* done, and my desires were not granted. It is given me to know that no other condition is necessary or desirable, than that which the providence of God appoints, and given me also to know I am exposed to no other danger or loss than that of opposing or turning away from the will or counsel of God.

The all-wise and all-powerful Creator is in the midst of his creatures, beholding the evil and the good, and he permits all things to be as they are. Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, and though clouds and darkness are round about him, he reigns over all, and will never permit any

that trust in him to be confounded. Blessed be his holy name, and blessed be the principles of his righteous government. Blessed be the trials and sufferings he has permitted me to feel and enabled me to endure. He has done all things well, and "though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

CHAPTER XXII.

We must look to God, not to Men, for the Reward of our Good Works—Duty of Trusting the Lord, not asking present pay.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

December, 1847.]

WITHIN a few weeks past the dealings of Providence have made me know I must not desire or expect to receive good from any creature. The good that I do or receive, is from above, and what I do must be done heartily as unto the Lord and not unto men, and what I hope to receive I must expect from God and not from the creature. In the performance of duty I may be governed by the authority of the Word of God, and may have respect to the approbation of Him who will render to every man according to his works, but I must not labor for such returns as men are able or willing to give, nor have respect to the approbation or esteem of those who are benefitted by my labors. The commandment is, "do good, and lend hoping for nothing again." In keep-

ing this commandment there is great reward, but the reward is not of men but of God; and indeed the reward is forfeited if we do good for the purpose of receiving good from men.

The motive or desire that leads us to do good must not be to receive grateful acknowledgments in return, nor to make others know or feel themselves indebted to us, for indeed if we be permitted to do good, we ought first to feel our deep indebtedness to God, who condescends to employ us in dispensing his benefits, and secondly, we ought to feel our obligation to those who will receive his benefits from our hands. The motive inducing acts of kindness or benevolence, should be the love of the commandment which is just and good, and of unquestionable authority. We should reckon it our privilege to lay our sacrifice upon the altar to be consumed there, praying that God would accept, not that he would buy or pay us for the offering.

Since I began to learn the purity and extent of the divine law, I find myself unable to render perfect obedience to the most simple command. Long established and selfish habits of thought and feeling attend my best efforts, and render my best services imperfect and worthless. I am slow and often unwilling to present my sacrifice to God alone. I have the creature in view, and beside the glory of God and the divine approbation, I am seeking and expecting a second benefit, and am grieved and disappointed if I gain no present or temporal advantage from doing right. I know it is my duty to *trust*

the Lord, and serve him in doing good to his creatures without asking present pay. It is my privilege to communicate and dispense to others what is committed to me, and in so doing cease to desire or expect from the creature any reward for my imperfect obedience to the divine command. Indeed, I have nothing to do with, or expect from the creature but to consider them as subjects of the divine administration, and conduct myself toward them as though I saw them held in the divine hand, and employed as instruments to try my faith, and prove my ways. In days past I have been offended and made weak, because I separated the instrument from the hand that held it, and did not discern in the trials and changes that concerned me the divine counsel and agency of Him with whom we have to do.

"A clearer light now marks the road that leads me to the Lamb;" and herein I learn I may no more complain nor be offended on account of any thing the creature may be employed or permitted to do, neither may I any more desire or expect help from man, or be afflicted because I receive from others no grateful returns for the benefits I am permitted to confer upon them. All things are of God, in whom I live and move and have my being, and if I may be assisted to do always those things that please him, it is enough, and henceforth I may well be thankful and content, and be diligent in every good work, without the hope of any other reward than the blessed privilege of knowing and doing his will.

While I have this light I must walk in it, other-

wise the light is gone, and I know not what to do. When grace is given, it must be tried and improved according to its own measure, otherwise it is taken away, and the soul left more destitute than before. The Lord deals with me after this manner, and in order to make his grace effectual and lead me into all truth, he takes away every other help or support, save that which his grace and truth supplies. In these days, my inward and outward state is peculiarly afflicting. All my inward and outward righteousness which has hitherto afforded me some comfort and hope, I now find to be only a just occasion for conviction and humble acknowledgement. I seem to be far from God, not indeed farther than in days past, but farther than I have before conceived. The same grace which has hitherto been sufficient, will not sustain me now. My faith must be increased, and I must be more like Christ in my conduct and disposition in order to endure. The light that shines on my path—the truth that commends itself to my conscience, will consume and destroy, or sanctify and transform the soul. The way of the cross, is an onward, upward way, and as I advance therein, seeking the things that are above, I must leave farther and farther in the distance the things that belong to earth. I must leave behind and forget the help and friendship of men, if I will follow Christ to the mansion he is preparing for me. The cross is the crucifixion of this natural, selfish life, and the separation of the soul from all sensual and temporal supports.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Reflections on the New-Year—Influence of Passing Events—Emptiness of Earthly Things—The Word of God powerless without the Agency of his Spirit.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

January, 1848.]

In coming to the beginning of this new year, I find myself hardly inclined to notice or be interested in the fact that years and seasons are passing away. The course of time continues to roll the seasons round, and great and solemn changes transpire within the period of each revolution. But what is this to me; my business and interests are with him who is the first and the last, the beginning and the ending of all things. My times are in his hand, and the changes that come to me I receive from him. The ending of the past year, and the beginning of the new, produces no change in my mind which is now being stayed on him, who is the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

It is given me to see and hear many things that are being done in the world, and from these I learn that nothing continues in one stay. The world are busy here and there, and the desires and pursuits of the multitude are as various and unstable as the changing cloud that passes over them. But what have I to do with these passing events, but to consider them as the results of an over-ruling Providence, who presides over the doings and destinies of his creatures, and learn therefrom the uncertain and transitory nature of all earthly things.

The changes and revolutions that make up the present history of men and things, do not affect me as they once did. I daily learn, and every year brings clearer evidence, that men do not fear God and work righteousness; and I seem brought to that place and that state, wherein I may see and deplore the errors and miseries of my fellow-creatures, but may not do any thing to remove them. I am myself far from God, and see, as it were, a picture or visible representation of the perverseness and blindness of my own heart, in the character and condition of the world around me. My sins have separated betwixt me and my God, and I feel like one whom he has left in a desert place, among strangers, whose language I cannot understand, and to whom I cannot make myself understood. My opinions and desires are not in harmony with the world around me, and there is in my heart an aversion to the pursuits and enjoyments that come before me. I am, as it were, a stranger in a strange land, and the more I strive

to become acquainted with the world and reconciled to its opinions and employments, I am so much the more dissatisfied and separated from them. I am myself so ignorant, so often mistaken, and so changing in my feelings, that I dare not be satisfied or established in my present state, and can only wait with strong desire upon Him whose wisdom and power in the government of his creatures none can comprehend.

A dispensation of the gospel is committed unto us, and herein are found the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in the unsearchable riches of Christ; but without the wisdom that comes from above, and the presence and approving smile of our Maker, even these most precious blessings are empty and unprofitable. They are, as it were, a dead letter, a lifeless form, in the use of which we are not quickened or refreshed.

THE FAMILY OF GOD.

The children of God are one great family, and the Gospel of Christ distinctly presents and clearly defines the spirit and principles of action, that distinguish and govern the character and conduct of this great brotherhood. They are members of one household, having one Father whom they love supremely, and each other as themselves. But as professing Christians, or members of the visible Church, our present circumstances resemble the condition of an ungrateful family, whose unreasonable conduct has offended and grieved their Father, and constrained

him to retire from his own house, and leave his disobedient children in the possession of his goods. They can now, without fear or reproof, use their liberty, and appropriate his treasures according to their own selfish purposes, and at the same time claim the honor and respect of their Father's name and character, and all the privileges and immunities of his house. They can do as they please, and justify their conduct, because they feel not their Father's displeasure, and are not afraid of his correction, even though they know his laws are violated and his authority disregarded.

Surely it now becometh all those that do truly fear God and love his commandments, to humble themselves before him, and be afflicted and confess their sins, and offer their fervent prayer that God would be merciful to the remnant of his people. Truly we are reduced very low, and that which is most grievous and fearful in our condition, is the fact that we understand not our low estate, and are so willing to remain as we are. If we believed what great things God hath prepared for us, and if, with all our heart we would seek after them, we should quickly receive the fulfillment of the promises, and the family of heaven would be a name and a praise in all the earth.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO PRAY.

O be encouraged all ye that truly love God and keep his laws. Our Father will return to his own, and will rule in, and reign over them that love his

appearing. He will execute his laws, and establish his authority, and the accuser be cast down, and the deceiver deceive no more. He will acknowledge his people, and we shall know the Lord is our God. O Lord, how shall thy people present their prayer before thee, and what shall be the nature and form of their request. Thou must thyself inspire and order our petition, otherwise we know not what to pray for, and must of necessity ask amiss. Thou hast given us thy blessed Word, by which we must live and by which we shall be judged; and herein thou hast given us a revelation of thy holy will, that we may know what is good, and what we ought to pray for. We know our petition must be in harmony with thy laws, and in accordance with the promises and requisitions of thy Word. It would be most foolish and vain to ask any thing thou hast not taught us to pray for; for of ourselves we have no knowledge of good, nor any desire to attain it, only as we are taught of thee. The greatest good we can desire or hope to enjoy is, that our souls be renewed in thine image, so that we shall love and serve thee with a perfect heart and willing mind; and this is revealed and promised to all them that diligently seek thee. If we ask any thing according to thy will, thou hearest us, and we believe we have the things we ask for, for thy word is true and faithful. And, O Lord, is it not according to thy will that we desire and ask thee to quicken and revive thy believing children, and give them grace to love thy commandments and keep them. May we not pray

thee to write thy laws in our heart and put them in our mind, that we may know and serve thee, even as thou hast commanded us. How can we serve and glorify thee as we ought, unless thou manifest thyself to us as thou dost not to the world, and we know thou art our God, and thou acknowledge us as thy people. O Lord, the prayer of thy children—the prayer of the humble and contrite is before thee, and thou wilt not despise their prayer. The set time to favor Zion will surely and quickly come; and thou wilt fulfill the desire of them that seek thee with their whole heart, and not according to their number or their merit, but according to thy words and thy great mercy, thou wilt bless them and raise them up.

REMARKS ON THE NATURE AND EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

When the children of God present their request before him, they need not do as the subjects of earthly governments do, when they petition their rulers for some special favor. The men of the world, in presenting an appeal to their governors, strive to gain the approbation of a majority of the people, and consider the success of their petition as being more certain in proportion to the great number of names attached to it. If possible, they secure the advice and co-operation of rich and popular men; because their names have influence with the powers that be. And if many wealthy and honorable persons append heir names to any petition presented before the

civil magistrate. the petitioners can hardly fail of success; and otherwise, if the petition be attended with no other than the names of humble, obscure persons, however lawful their request or virtuous their character, their appeal will most likely be rejected.

But in presenting a petition before the King of kings, numbers and names avail nothing. The distinctions that men value are unnoticed by him. Wealth, honorable titles, and lofty dignitaries are without influence in his presence. He considers only the nature of the petition, and the character of the petitioners, and if these be in accordance with his laws and the principles of his government, the petition is accepted and the request fulfilled.

When the subjects of King Immanuel resolve to bring their petition before a throne of grace, they need not go about to persuade the multitude to join with them. They cannot be more sure of success because many, or all of the people say amen. Their petition will not be accepted or noticed on this account, because many rich or noble are represented therein and interested in its accomplishment. The sovereign Ruler of the universe has never said the prayer of the great and honorable is my delight, nor let the rich and learned present their petition and I will receive it; but by the mouth of the prophet has said, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word;" and by the Psalmist: "He will regard the prayer of the destitute and not despise their prayer."

Two qualifications are indispensible in preparing and addressing a petition to the court of heaven, and these must distinguish and accompany every successful appeal to the throne of grace. And first, the petition must be in harmony with the laws and requisitions of the Word of God; and secondly, the petitioners must be the willing and obedient subjects of these laws. If we ask any thing not in accordance with his will, it cannot be granted. If we ask any thing that we may consume it upon our lusts, or that we cannot or will not use for the glory of God, we ought to know our request is more worthy of reproof than of regard, and if our Father condescend to answer this petition, he must express therein his displeasure rather than his approbation. If civil rulers knew their petitioners were unreconciled to the laws of the land, and their spirit and conduct opposed to the government, their petition would be at once rejected, and they would consider it unwise and dangerous to grant such men any favor or special privilege. The King of kings is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and when we ask for good things, either temporal or spiritual, he knows what we are able and willing to do with them; and he knows it is better that we be sent empty away, than that we receive mercies we will not improve to his glory, or be able to return with usury.

The prayer of the unfaithful or unbelieving is not that which avails, but the prayer of the faithful, who will improve what they receive, is that which has

power with God. In the examples recorded in Scripture, and in all ages of the Church, we have seen the power and help of the spirit manifested, not when a mixed multitude were calling upon him, but when the faithful few were alone united in fervent supplication. The multitude may condemn and oppose the prayers of the faithful, but they cannot prevent their success; or they may approve and endorse their petitions, and they cannot make them more effectual. The Lord reigns, and the servants of Christ have no more occasion to fear or regard the enmity and opposition of the ungodly, than they have to value or trust in their friendship and co-operation.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Impossible for any Creature to gain an Advantage by violating the Laws of the Creator.

ALL PRAISE AND POWER BELONG TO GOD.

Our help cometh from God alone, who holds all things in his own hands, and employs whatever agencies seemeth him best in the care and management of his creatures. Our safety and peace consist in the exercise of his love toward us—secure this, and all is gained, lose this, and all is lost. It is dangerous and absurd to suppose we know any thing of ourselves, or to imagine in our heart we can do this or that and be profited. The truth is, if the Lord will, we can do this or that, and our doings shall work for good. Where the Lord directs, we may go, and the work he appoints we may do, otherwise there is no wisdom or profit in our ways. The laws of our being are such that it is impossible to gain an advantage by departing from the counsel

of God, or receive profit for breaking the commands of our Maker. If we violate his laws, or trust in any creature, or lean to our own understanding, we err from the truth, and for this error we must suffer loss.

Fallen and ruined mortals are not wise or independent. Their condition is the farthest removed from this, and it becometh them to confess what they are, and avoid the appearance of what they are not. In the presence and view of holy beings, helpless creatures cannot appear wise or powerful, but in the judgment of men whose wisdom and knowledge are limited to a point, vain and proud mortals may affect to be wise and assume a character not their own. As sinners redeemed, we may desire and strive to be pure in heart, and holy in life, and when we attain this state and maintain the character of the righteous, merit or praise belongs not to us, but to him who hath wrought this good work in us for his own glory and our salvation.

O, when shall we learn to ascribe all the power and praise to him to whom it is due; and no more desire or expect any part of the honor that belongs to God. How shall we separate ourselves from the good wrought in us, and hide our name and character where no praise can reach them. Thou alone, O Lord, canst deliver from this evil, and preserve blameless in this temptation. We know the honor that comes from men can only stain and pollute the soul thou hast made clean, and yet how shall we escape and be altogether separate from it. We

dare not be as a robber or receiver of other men's goods; how then shall we dare to receive honor, or be distinguished or approved of men because we have obtained mercy. There is none good but one, that is God, and all the good that is done, he doeth it. The Lord will work by whom he will, and manifest his grace and truth to whom he will choose; and no creature may glory in his presence, or say in his heart, my righteousness hath done this.

If any creature be accepted of God and employed in his service, he may not appropriate to himself any portion of the goods wherewith he may be entrusted. The knowledge of truth, heavenly wisdom and spiritual riches, are indeed precious gifts, and such merchandise as this, the Lord of heaven and earth commits to those whom he hath judged to be faithful. O how upright, how far from guile, how free from merit or praise must they be who are found worthy to be entrusted with the things of God. They have no time, nor strength, nor goods, to use for any selfish or unholy purpose, and having resigned themselves to God, and left all to follow Christ, their honor and riches consist in being empty and free from the things of self, and being filled and employed with the things of God.

Nothing can be more helpless, nothing more dependent, than the soul that enjoys and lives in the divine will. It can of itself do nothing. It will not act, nor choose, nor be employed by others, without a reasonable assurance that the Holy Spirit guides and approves its decisions. The love of God and

living faith in him is the element in which it lives and moves; all its movements being governed by the simple intention to please him. It knows no other wisdom, no other interest or choice than to obey God and be accepted of him. In this state the soul seeks only the honor that comes from God, and is not hindered or turned away from this, by the praise or honor that comes from men.

DEPENDENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF RATIONAL BEINGS.

The Lord reigns, and all things in heaven and on earth were created subject to him. Wisdom and power belong to God, and beside him there is no king, and no judge. He made the earth and created man and beast upon it that they might live and enjoy his goodness and glorify him. Men were created a little lower than the angels, and directly responsible to none but the Creator. They are dependent on God alone, and are required to render obedience and subjection to none beside him.

The claims and privileges of the brute creation are subject to the dominion of rational beings. They were created for man and given to him to be his servants, without any possessions or privileges of their own, only so far as might be the good pleasure of rational beings to favor them. If they transcend their limits and intrude on forbidden ground, they forfeit their liberty or their life. They were designed to be subject to man, and the condition of their being is such that they make themselves a pray to

be destroyed, when they exercise any power, or enjoy any pleasure not included in the privileges of their inferior state. Inasmuch as they are harmless and obedient, they are safe and happy in being employed and protected by those whose right it is to rule over them.

As the inferior animals are subject to man. and are counted worthless only so far as they contribute to his interest or pleasure—as they have no wisdom to resist his authority, no power to oppose his dominion—as they are silent when he speaks and obedient when he commands; even so human beings are and must be subject to their Maker. Rational intelligencies are created with other and higher powers than the beasts that perish, but equally helpless and dependent as they. The unruly domestic animal that will not serve nor be afraid of his master is not more exposed nor more in danger, than the foolish man who will not learn obdience and submission to his Maker. The only liberty designed for moral beings is the liberty to obey God, and liberty to enjoy the happiness he gives to them that serve him. If they transcend this limit and abuse this liberty, they are intruders on forbidden ground, and have forfeited the protection and favor of their Maker, whose right it is to rule and reign over them.

The laws and commands of the great King are as a wall of defence placed round about his creatures, and designed to protect the obedient. Within this enclosure the Lord takes care of them, and here they

may enjoy a peaceful habitation and "quiet and secure resting places." But if they go astray and transgress the limits assigned them, they go away from the only place of safety, and in refusing submission and obedience to their Maker, they forsake their own mercies, and separate themselves from every good thing.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Morals of Christianity, better than the Morals of Infidelity—Worldly Men imitate the Morals and profess to be governed by the Principles of Christianity.

THE FORM OF CHRISTIANITY QUICKENED BY THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD.

"The Lord is our Lawgiver, our Judge and our King; he will save us." When the Holy Spirit is given to lead us into all truth, and in all things we will have him to rule in and reign over us, we are saved. We are no more in bondage to the elements of the world, but are free in Christ and free indeed. O Lord, thou hast given us thy spirit and thy truth to be our light and our guide in the way of salvation; but we do not love them and will not be governed by them; and because we will not receive and obey the truth, our light has become darkness. We know the way, but we do not choose to walk in it. We hear and acknowledge the truth that is able

to save our souls, but we are not saved by it. The light in us is darkness, and we walk according to that darkness, and not according to that light. "Our knowledge puffeth up," and does not make us wise unto salvation. We say we believe the truth, but are not sanctified through the truth. We acknowledge "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness," but we do not show by our words and works that it is done to us according to this faith.

We have the form, that is, we have the gospel and its ordinances, but they are, as it were, a dead letter without spirit and without life. We have the body beautiful and comely indeed, but the soul is wanting. God is not in the congregation of his people. The sanctuary is an empty, desolate place, because the divine presence is not manfested there, and when the humble, inquiring penitent goes to the house of God, he must return again as Mary did from the sepulchre, weeping; when she said they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. We have every thing that belongs to Christianity, but the spirit and works of Christ. We have the doctrines of holiness and the forms of godliness, but this excellent and perfect body of Christianity, is animated and quickened by the spirit of the world. If God and Christ were its life, it could not be so powerless among men. It would distinguish and separate Christians from every other people, and the presence and power of Christ would

be "as a wall of fire round about, and the glory in their midst." The members of Christ may be an afflicted and poor people, neither claiming nor receiving the favors or friendship of the world, but they cannot be lovers of pleasure or friends of the world, or be engaged in laying up treasures on earth. They may suffer wrong, but cannot consent to do wrong, and they can only look to God, not to men, for the redress of their grievances.

The spirit and life of Christianity necessarily produce their own fruits, and if this life be in us, the fruits will appear, and our works will be manifest that they are wrought in God, but if this life be not in us, we may have the form and profess the doctrine, but we do not worship and serve God according to his commandment. It is well perhaps for a wicked world that the form of godliness exists, even though its power were unknown. The morals of Christianity are better than the morals of heathenism or infidelity, and it is better, at least in this present state, that men acknowledge and profess the truth, even though none should be saved by it. Wherever the precepts and doctrines of the gospel are published, they throw around society a healthful and powerful restraint, without which wicked men would be more like demons than they are. The salutary and peaceful effects of religious knowledge are profitable, even to those who hate its spirit and life.

The morals of Christianity are good and profitable, but they are not its basis or foundation. The

good works of Christians do not save them; they are only an expression or fruit of that grace and truth in them, which saves. He that has the mind of Christ, is faithful and diligent in doing what his hands find to do, and his works are acceptable to God, because they are the outward expression of the inner or hidden man. They are not so much a savor of the creature as they are a savor of Christ, who works in the creature to do what is just and good. He that has the mind of Christ is not striving to imitate or appear like a Christian, but he is striving to be led by the spirit of truth which is in him, and to act in sincerity like himself.

The policy of worldly men dispose them to imitate the morals and outward works of Christianity. Their profession and conduct must appear to be in accordance with justice and truth in order to secure the confidence and respect of an intelligent community, and hence the ambitious and time-serving are ready to admit the principles of Christianity, and profess to be governed by them. The world generally approve the doctrines and morals of the Christian religion, and are ready to lend their aid in establishing and defending the institutions of public worship. Wicked men manifest little resistance or aversion to the influence of religion as it now exists in the world; they are not afraid of its claims or its authority, and hence the world are in harmony and on friendly terms with the professed people of God, and these also are well pleased to accept the friendship of the world. The influence and contributions

of worldly men are considered a valuable means of extending the interests and increasing the popularity of our holy religion.

Though it has come to pass in these days that the world and those called Christians are agreed to work together in building up the Redeemer's kingdom, it has not come to pass that Christ and belial are reconciled to each other; and though there may be nothing in the profession of Christianity or in the form of godliness that separates or distinguishes those who put on the name of Christ from those who know not God, there is something in the mind and spirit of Christ entirely separate and diverse from any thing in the unregenerate world. That which is of the earth is earthly, and that which is of God is heavenly, and has the testimony and zeal of his spirit written upon it. There cannot be a resemblance or union between light and darkness, neither can Christian fellowship and mutual confidence unite the children of God and the friends of the world. The Word of God, and not the opinions of men establish this truth, and we may not deny or reason against the Word of God.

The time is coming, and the time is come, when those who will live godly in Christ Jesus, are called to separate themselves from the works of darkness and let their light shine. The time is come when the light of the world must shine, and shine with that clearness and brilliancy that shall expose and make manifest the hidden things of darkness. The children of God are being prepared to come forth

endued with power from on high, and able to testify that Christ is in them of a truth, and that "all he hath is theirs." Why should they wander in the wilderness another year? Why should they feed upon husks and suffer hunger when there is bread enough and to spare in their Father's house. They have long dwelt among strangers, and labored to make themselves a fruitful habitation on the enemies ground, but they have wasted their substance and are now in want. When they arise and come to their Father, he will meet them while they are yet afar off. He will put on them the robe of righteousness and rejoice over them as being made alive from the dead, as children returned from their wanderings.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Personal Experience—Sympathy with the Afflicted —Waiting upon God.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

September, 1848.]

This is indeed a day of darkness and perplexity, and no where can I find light or comfort but in the Word of God. In the deep and silent solitude of the heart, there is something that inspires hope and confidence to wait, and wait upon the Lord. A still, small voice whispers, be patient, establish your heart, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. If none of my fellow-creatures suffered more than I do, I should suffer less. But the great amount of extreme wretchedness that presses heavily upon an immense multitude of human beings, is to me a source of much grief and sorrow of heart. I apprehend their miseries and sympathize with their sufferings, and love to pray and groan with them under their burdens. I love them as I love myself, and how can I

be comforted and enjoy the good things of this life, when my brother, and sister, and mother, are oppressed and afflicted with all manner of evils.

I have the Word of God, and time to read and make my prayer to him; I have faith in his promises, and the Holy Spirit leads me into green pastures beside the still waters. I have the comforts of life freely provided for me, and with all these great supports I am often weary and tremble under the weight of my own infirmities, and the difficulties and dangers I feel and fear within and round about me. But O how many there be that are oppressed with more and greater evils than I have known, and have not these supports.

Providence has made abundant provision for the safety and well-being of his creatures, and inasmuch as they are subject to his laws, and love one another, they are blest and happy; but inasmuch as they choose rather to abuse than improve his gifts, they must be wretched. The earth is fruitful, and its yearly productions are abundantly sufficient to satisfy the reasonable wants of every living creature, and if the fruits of the earth were judiciously distributed and wisely improved by all, every one would have enough and to spare. If the bounties of Providence were not wasted in luxury and idleness, the misery and ignorance that prevail in consequence of poverty, could not exist.

Beside the multitude who will keep themselves poor and dependent by their own indolence and dissipation, there are thousands who assume the au-

thority, and take the liberty to appropriate to themselves more than is necessary for their comfort or convenience, and by this means an immense number of the poor and ignorant are deprived of the necessaries of life. Thousands are compelled to serve the rich and powerful, and receive at their hand what selfishness or avarice are willing to give. In the great family of mankind there are immense multitudes of children—of aged, and infirm, and ignorant persons, who cannot help themselves, and are entirely dependent on their superiors for their daily support. They know no other way than to depend on those who claim the right to do what they will with their own, and to rule as they please over all that are subject to them. If the oppressed and degraded suffered no greater affliction than the want of comfortable food and clothing, the evil would be less, and there would be less reason to weep and mourn on their account. But the greater evil exists in the fact that they are without the means of instruction, and unable to attain that knowledge without which they cannot be intelligent and happy.

The selfish and perverse heart of man will have it so, and human beings will afflict and destroy each other, because they love what is evil and hate what is good. There is in the storehouse of nature an abundant supply for all of nature's wants, and there is in the storehouse of grace the riches of wisdom and knowledge, and a fullness of mercy and truth to meet the spiritual necessities of every creature. But ignorant, foolish mortals, will not learn to be happy.

We will choose the evil and refuse the good, until we destroy ourselves without remedy. For this cause I weep and am in bitterness of spirit, and the anguish I feel can only be measured by the miseries that occasion it. I would do good but my arm is powerless. I would enlighten the ignorant and relieve the wretched, but I am too helpless even to take care of myself. I cannot reach the necessities of my fellow-creatures, and can only pray and wait upon God for his salvation.

WAITING ON GOD.

Come Lord Jesus, and come quickly; thou alone canst deliver us from evil and give us to know and enjoy the things that belong to our peace. Thy absence is all I have to mourn, thy presence is all I desire. My home, my treasure are with thee, though now for a little season I am separated from thee. Thou art very near to me though I see thee not, and thou seest and knowest me, though I cannot see and know thee as thou art. For thy sake I am a stranger in the world, and for the love of thee I forsake every thing else. The hope and peace I have in thee make all the pleasures and joys of earth worthless, so that I cannot be pleased with them. Thou art my exceeding joy, and while I remain here I will have no other. I will remain with them that are afflicted and are waiting thine appearing, until our Lord come and cheer us with his presence. I will not please nor refresh myself with earthly comforts, lest I should at any time forget thee, the only Com-

forter and only beloved portion of my soul. How long, O Lord, how long shall I live without thee, and when shall I embrace thee and see thee as thou art, without a veil between. I sigh and groan after thee, and the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together with me, waiting for thy coming.

The exceeding precious promises given for our encouragement in our banishment, are indeed sufficient to cheer the exile, and make the prisoner joyful in hope. How inspiring and how full of comfort are these blessed words, "the just shall live by faith;" and, "he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." The hope of the gospel is the life and comfort of those that wait upon God, and this hope shall not perish, neither shall it make them ashamed. The things they desire and wait for are promised, and the promise is the Word of God, which is true and faithful. Nothing shall fail of all the good spoken concerning them, and they shall arise and shine, and put on their beautiful garments when the glory of the Lord is risen upon them. For a little season they may be in heaviness through manifold temptations, and be destitute of earthly and heavenly comforts, but the time of displeasure and rebuke will come to an end, and the gloomy darkness of earth's moral night, vanish away in the morning of the perfect day.

Come Lord Jesus, come quickly; we are weary of every thing we have here. Our best privileges, our purest joys, are mingled with bitterness and sorrow. We are waiting for thee, and being made ready

to receive thee at thy coming. We are strangers in a strange land, and cannot make ourselves a pleasant habitation in this wilderness. The land is full of idols, and because wickedness abounds, ignorance and misery are the portion of its inhabitants. Even our heavenly things are mingled with so much of earthliness, that grief and shame becometh us more than joy and triumph. There remains for us no pleasant portion, until thou wilt come and rule in and reign over us. The world and its pleasures are not ours, and if they were, there is no pleasure in them. Since we have loved thee, we have ceased to relish the things of the world, and now we only wait and hope for thine appearing. We love thy laws, and we will keep them, when thou wilt dwell with us and acknowledge us thy people.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LIGHT OF REVELATION PROGRESSIVE.

"THE path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." While ages and generations have been passing away, the path of the righteous has been growing brighter and brighter, and drawing nearer and nearer that blessed and perfect day, when the will of God shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. In the beginning, light came into the world, and the Father of lights gave to his creatures that measure and degree of light which his own infinite wisdom and perfection saw best. When our first parents sinned, they lost all. They forfeited the light, and image and favor of God, and were plunged into impervious darkness, where there was no help and no hope. But instantly they were redeemed, and light was comprehended and communicated in the promise: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Christ is the light of the rational and moral world. No other light has, or ever will shine upon the intellect of

fallen and depraved beings, save that which was, and is, and shall be communicated through the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The light shone through every word having this seal: "Thus saith the Lord;" and continued to shine through every prophecy and promise spoken by holy men of old. As in the beginning the Lord spake and the earth heard, he has continued to speak through his servants, the prophets and apostles, and faithful witnesses, until this day. There was light and life in the promise, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." In process of time, when light had greatly increased, and the way was prepared, the substance of the promise appeared visible, and the world was illuminated with direct rays of pure light from the brightness of the Father's glory, in the person of his Son.

CHRIST THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

The Son of God was always in the world, and the world was made by him; but the world knew him not because the dense moral blindness of fallen, sinful beings, could not comprehend the light that shone in the midst of darkness. But the light continued to increase in brightness, until the voice of inspiration said, "life and immortality are brought to light in the Gospel." Nearly two thousand years ago, the "seed of the woman," "the root out of dry ground," was seen in the Babe of Bethlehem, and declared to be the light of the world. The divinity

and power attending this light were manifest in the recovery of health to the sick, of sight to the blind, of hearing to the deaf, and in the preaching of the gospel to the poor, and in the manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh; so that whosoever believeth in him might not perish but have everlasting life. And for nearly two thousand years the world have continued to hear and see new displays of the wisdom and power of God, in the unsearchable riches of Christ.

The Way, the Truth, and the Life are, and shall be more clearly revealed in the testimony and character of them that learn of Jesus, than they were or could have been in the prophecies, types, and shadows that obscurely signified the substance of things hoped for. Inasmuch, and as far as prophecy and promise are fulfilled, and the things signified therein revealed and given to the children of God, in the same measure a brighter light shines on their path, and through them this light is reflected on the world, which is, or should be directed thereby to the source from whence all light and life proceed.

Since fallen beings first heard the words of eternal truth, and the will and knowledge of God began to be revealed to mortals, the predictions, promises, and truths contained in divine revelation, have been continually passing before them, and the fulfillment of these truths have been the subjects of experience and observation since the probation of moral beings commenced. Every new event, every change that takes place in the history of men and things, is a

new development or manifestation of the wisdom and goodness of the divine mind. These revelations have been treasured up in the records of the past, and these faithful witnesses of the grace and wonderful works of God, have been accumulating in the world till the present day.

In these last days, the wisdom and experience of past ages are spread out before us. The confession of saints and martyrs is laid at our feet, and the knowledge and love of God, transmitted to the world through these living examples of holiness, was intended not only for those who first received, but for those also who should live after them. A multitude of faithful witnesses have received grace and truth from above, not only that they alone might glorify God, but that the knowledge of God might enlighten the world, and his grace abound more and more toward all them that would receive it.

Though the world generally have not loved God, nor desired the knowledge of his ways, yet he has never left himself without witness; and in every age there have been at least a few faithful ones, who received Christ, and gave testimony to the word of his grace, according to the light of their dispensation; and through these the Word of God and the knowledge of his Word, have been extending and increasing in the earth. Our Lord and Saviour has not withdrawn the light, nor ceased to give more abundantly unto them who have improved it, because the world, or the Church even, have loved darkness and chosen to walk in it. In the beginning light

came into the world ; and whether men would hear or forbear, whether they would come to the light or not, it has continued to shine brighter and brighter, and reveal more and more clearly the moral quality and results of human actions.

Light does not originate in or come from the Prince of darkness, but from the Creator and Governor of all things, who is the only light of the world. In consequence of the increase of light, the principles of science, and improvements in the arts are discovered and made manifest. "Whatsoever maketh manifest, is light," whether the discovery or manifestation brings to view things in the natural or moral world. The progress and increase of knowledge in the arts and sciences, are not more important nor more certain than the progress and increase of the knowledge of the Word of God, and of the disposition and conduct which he requires to serve and glorify Him.

TRUTH ETERNAL.

Truth or the principles of knowledge are eternal in their nature, and therefore without beginning and without increase ; but in the intellectual and moral world, the knowledge of truth is ever increasing. A new invention is not a new creation or a new principle, but a new discovery, or application of something that existed before ; and this new discovery is only another effect or result of the light that is increasing in the world. It is the nature or property of light to expose and make manifest, and hence things that were unknown or hidden, are be-

ing revealed. The properties of steam and of electricity have always existed as they now do, but until recently, men have not discovered what they might do with them, nor learned how available and useful they might be in the arts and business of life. The principles of Philosophy and of Mathematics have always existed as they are now understood; but how gradually and wonderfully they have been developed and brought within the grasp of the human mind.

The principles of holiness and truth have existed in their beauty and perfection from the foundation of the world, but the knowledge and the practical application of these principles in their various relations to human beings, and their influence upon the character and understanding of men, have been gradually developed, and made more and more manifest to every succeeding generation. It did not appear to our fathers what great things should be given to their children, only as the spirit of prophecy obscurely revealed them. They desired to see the things we now see, but did not see them, and to hear the things we now hear, but did not hear them. The prophets and apostles, and the faithful in ages past, lived, as it were, in the time of twilight, in comparison of the greater light of the present gospel day. Holy men of old were acknowledged and honored of God, because they were faithful over a few things. They lived according to the light of their own age, and were counted profitable servants, because they returned to God the talents they received, with usury.

They believed in the light and walked in it, and hence the light in them did not become darkness.

FAITHFULNESS OF ANCIENT CHRISTIANS.

The saints and prophets of former ages, and the immediate disciples of our Lord, were perhaps more holy and more beloved and honored of God, than any who have lived since their days; but the reason they were so, is not because God is any respecter of persons, nor because a brighter light shone on their path, nor because a greater measure of the spirit was given to them than has since been the privilege of Christians to enjoy; but they were more holy, and more beloved of God, because they steadfastly believed the truth, and walked humbly before him in the light he gave, without falling away or turning from the holy commandments delivered unto them. They believed God, and rested in his Word with that confidence and strength of faith that made them willing and able to suffer the loss of all things for righteousness sake. Their character and conduct exhibited the faithful improvement of the talents they received, and their experience and knowledge of the things of God, were a living expression of the measure of the spirit given them. Therefore God accepted their works and highly exalted them.

The illustrious and righteous dead were a savor of Christ on earth. Their conversation was heavenly; and while they enjoyed communion with God, they held intercourse with men. Hence they shone as lights in the world, and the light transmitted through

them has never gone out nor been taken away. It has indeed become darkness to them that would not walk in it, but it has shown with increasing brightness on the path of them that would believe and obey. In all ages, the faithful have followed the way cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, and being enlightened and led therein by the Spirit of truth, which is the light of the world, they have reflected new light there, and left the way more brightly illuminated than before. A multitude of faithful disciples beside those recorded in the inspired volume, have been witnesses for Jesus, and have declared to the world what they learned of him. They have lived in different ages and under different dispensations, and their spiritual state, and the things wherein they were taught of God, were in accordance with the fulfillment of prophecies and promises that were then being revealed to the world. The works of the righteous have followed them, and all these treasures of the wisdom and goodness of God which have shone forth and come from his Word and spirit, through the testimony and example of his children, have fallen upon this generation.

NEW LIGHT IMPOSES NEW OBLIGATIONS.

We are not in the place where our fathers were, and cannot be accepted and honored of God in rendering the same service and doing the same works that our fathers have done. O, no; in order to be accepted and blessed of God as our fathers were, we must be faithful as they were faithful—improve our

light as they improved theirs, and do as they would if they lived in our day. We are not called to worship and serve God in the use of the same means, nor in the same manner as in former years. We are not required to go to Jerusalem, neither should we take a lamb from the flock or bullock from the stall, and burn them upon the altar. Once we should do this, and the offering would have been acceptable to God, and profitable to us; but now, with such sacrifices God is not well pleased, because he has provided better things for us, and better sacrifices than these are required at our hands.

The exceeding great and precious promises, "by which we are made partakers of the divine nature," began to enlighten the path of the righteous nearly two thousand years ago, and in the reception and improvement of "the heavenly gifts," we come to the possession of those "better things provided for us." We are herein brought to the altar on which we must "present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service," and receive at his hand the fullness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ. Our duty and privilege herein are made manifest by the light that shines on the Word of God, and by the cloud of witnesses which have testified of these things.

Our heavenly Father requires of his Church and people according to the grace and truth given them, and his requisitions are reasonable and just. He cannot accept less than his claims, and all his righteous demands upon his creatures must be fully

met, or these demands remain in force against them. Rational, accountable beings, must walk in the light that shines upon them, otherwise their light becomes their darkness; and if their light becomes darkness, their darkness is great in the same degree as their light was clear and abundant. Inasmuch as the works of moral beings are not according to their light, they are the works of darkness, by which they treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath. The Church is responsible for the talents committed to her trust, and in order to meet her responsibilities, Christians must stand on that elevated and holy ground, which the order and progress of truth have been for ages and centuries preparing for them. They are required to possess and exhibit to the world, in their character and their works that measure of the Spirit, and that union and oneness with Christ, which are in accordance with the accumulated light that now shines on "the way of holiness," and which also are in accordance with the spirit of those prophecies and the substance of those promises that are being fulfilled in these last days.

It is not the lack of knowledge nor of spiritual light and understanding, that will condemn or banish us from the presence of the Lord. These are not the things that will witness against us in the last day. But the truth that has reached the understanding, the light that has shone on the soul, will judge and condemn, if we have turned away and refused to be led by them. The testimony that will make the sinner afraid, is the evidence that he would

not believe and obey the truth that was given to save him. He could not believe what he never heard or apprehended, and what he never apprehended, will never condemn him. The light he never had, will never be his darkness.

The present condition of the Christian world is truly favorable and exalted. Nothing more could have been done for earth's moral vineyard than has been done for it. The light of the gospel, civil and religious liberty, and the unrestrained circulation of the Holy Scriptures, are among the great blessings that have fallen upon the last ages of the world. These, with many other peculiar and exalted privileges, distinguish those who have lived within the last century, from the generations that passed away before them. In the same ratio that religious knowledge has accumulated, corresponding obligations have increased, and this is the condemnation of this generation—great light has fallen upon us, and we have refused to walk in it. If we were blind, we should have no sin; but we have seen great light, and have heard much truth, and yet are compelled to admit we are not in the same degree wise and holy; and as we are not in the same measure advanced in knowledge and true holiness, we must reckon ourselves in darkness and guilty, according to the light and truth we have neglected to improve.

In these days, the character and works of professing Christians generally will not bear the test, nor endure the exposure when examined by the light

that now shines upon them; and for this cause we remain as we are, and choose our delusions, rather than come to the knowledge of this truth, and be compelled to admit that our works are not wrought in God. How can we receive the humiliating and fearful conclusion, that the mind and spirit of Christ are not the life of our Christian profession, and that as a Christian Church, our service and worship are not acceptable and well-pleasing to God. If we admit these things, we admit that we stand reproved and guilty before God; and we admit also there now remains for us no remedy and no hope only in confessing and forsaking our sins, and with full purpose of heart turning to the Lord, from whom we have deeply revolted.

In these last days, the highway of holiness is cast up, and whoever will seek diligently, being fully determined to walk therein, will find ready at his hand, all the help he needeth. He cannot search long without finding the path of the just, and he cannot long continue therein, without attaining the higher results of Christian experience. The light of ages shines on the way, and those who name the name of Christ are called and required to walk therein and be perfect. He who hath called them, is able to preserve their whole spirit, soul and body, blameless, and he is faithful to his word, and will do it. They have wandered too long in the wilderness, and are now well able to drive out the Canaanites, and take possession of every good thing. The heavenly

Jerusalem is not far off, and in these days whoever will find the path of the just, and walk there, will find a brighter path and a *new* and *living* way that brings him nearer the gates of the holy city than our fathers ever found.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH, PRAYER OF FAITH, &C.

THE Christian faith is simply believing and living by every word of God; or it is believing and living in Christ who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. We believe God when we believe his words. We trust him when we take his commands for our guide and his promises for our portion, and we love him when we love his laws and approve all his doings. We serve God when we yield ourselves up to be led by his spirit, and we enjoy him when we desire and rejoice in him as he is, and in all that he does for us and for all his creatures.

Believing a lie, or doubting or disobeying any truth revealed in the Word of God, is opposed and contrary to faith in Christ. The Christian faith rests on the Word of God and the inspirations of the spirit of truth, and hence the subjects of this faith cannot believe or desire any thing contrary to this Word, or doubt any thing therein revealed. They cannot believe that God accepts and answers the

prayers of the impenitent and them that love sin; because this is not in accordance with his truth: neither is it of faith to believe that he receives and sanctifies any soul that will not love and keep his commandments. The prayer of the disciple is according to his faith, and his faith embraces no more nor less than that which he is taught of God to pray for. He can of himself desire nothing, and only even in the same measure as he receives the word and spirit of truth he can believe and pray in faith. The Christian faith holds fast whatever is according to every word of God, and whatever is opposed or contrary to this word it disapproves and rejects. The subjects of this faith not only believe that every word of God is true, but approve and embrace all he has said as being good and right; and they not only believe and are reconciled to the *Word* of God, but are reconciled to all he has done and all he will do. They would not if they could, take from, or add unto, any thing he has said, or any thing he will do, because they believe all his words and all his ways are right and perfect. And the believer in Christ having faith in God, is not only reconciled to his Word and his doings, but he loves him more than he loves parents, or wife, or children, and more than he loves his own life; and he loves him more because he apprehends and beholds more beauty and excellence in him than he sees in all these. The love of the Christian is not the love of himself nor the love of any creature, but the love of God; and in loving him, he loves the fulfillment of his promises, the

execution of his laws and his judgments, because all these are of and from God, and are the expressions of his holy will, and he would not if he could change or reverse them. He believes and approves the reward of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked—the penalty annexed to transgression and the blessings connected with faith and obedience. He believes these things because they are true; he accepts and approves them because they are right, and he loves and desires them because they are good and righteous altogether.

The prayer of faith is in harmony with the Word of God, because it is impossible that faith in Christ should believe or desire any thing contrary to his will or Word. Faith cannot believe that God does or will justify the ungodly—or that there is any concord between Christ and belial—or that unrighteousness can enter the kingdom of heaven, because, to believe this, is not believing the truth, and to desire or pray for this, is to pray that the will of God may not be done. The servants of Christ cannot pray that the Word of God be broken—that his laws be not executed, or that his promises be not fulfilled, because all these they steadfastly believe and love. The prayer of faith is in accordance with the intercessions of Christ, because it is the spirit of truth that helpeth our infirmities, and teacheth us how to pray according to the will of God. This prayer cannot fail, because it is of Him who hath all power in his hands, and who doeth all things according to the counsel of his own will.

The faith of the gospel comprehends and embraces the fulfillment of every word that God hath spoken —even the execution of his judgments and threatenings against the sinner, and, also, the substance of the promises given to the saints; and in the possession and exercises of this faith the believer is brought into the possession of things that were far off. The things prepared for them that love God are near at hand when the prayer of faith apprehends and desires them; and the kingdom of God and the things that appertain to his kingdom *have come*, when Christians discern and love the *whole* truth, and pray in faith that every word and promise of God be now fulfilled in them, and in the world.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Kingdoms of this World under the Dominion of the Common Enemy—The Disciples of Christ chosen out of the World.

DISTINCTION AND SEPARATION BETWEEN THE CHILDREN OF GOD AND THE CHILDREN OF THIS WORLD.

The prince of darkness claims the dominions of this world, and his subjects are wise and faithful to defend his claims and establish his authority. Moral, accountable beings, "are servants to whom they yield themselves servants to obey," and inasmuch as they love darkness and will not come to the light, they are the willing subjects of the prince of darkness, and are led captive by him at his will. Light has come into the world, but the world will not believe and walk in it. The light makes manifest, and discovers and reproves the evil that lies hid and concealed under the darkness. The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; and

because the natural man will not love nor believe the truth, his heart is not renewed in knowledge, nor his understanding enlightened to discern heavenly and spiritual things. The children of darkness cannot walk according to the light and truth which they despise and reject. They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world being their chosen portion, they love and enjoy earthly things.

Our Lord said to his disciples, "ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." And that disciple whom Jesus loved, said, "ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." And also it is written, "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord." And again, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me out of the world, for they are thine."

From the beginning, the children of God have been called and chosen to be separate from the childred of the world, and according to the word and spirit of truth, there ever has and ever must be an immense distance between them. This distance or separation is not known or measured by outward circumstances, nor by distance of time or place; but is known and estimated by an immense difference of character, pursuits and prospects. The man of the world, and the man whose life is hid with Christ in God, may seem to be alike in their outward appearance, but there is no essential resemblance or

communion between them. They are the servants of two masters whose characters are diverse, and whose interests are opposed to each other. The darkness of this world does not perceive or discern this difference, but it is clearly revealed in the Word of God, and evidently manifest in the world.

DEVICES OF SATAN.

One of the grandest and most successful devices of the prince of darkness consists in making a distinction or separation among his own subjects; disposing a part of them to put on the form of godliness, and contend for the doctrines and ceremonies of Christianity. By this device, men of corrupt minds deceive themselves, and assume the character and profession of godliness, and claim and maintain a place and an influence in the sanctuary. They are in deed and in truth their own master's faithful servants, but professing themselves to be the children of God, they assume the responsibility of instructing the ignorant and of reproving them that are out of the way, and through their influence the multitude are taught and led every way, save in the narrow way of holiness and truth. The enemy deceives his subjects whom he inclines to profess Christ, hence in their Christian profession many of them really believe they are doing God service.

Truly the Prince of darkness has most successfully practiced this device, and hence the visible Church is composed of a mixed multitude of people, embracing every variety of character and of sentiment.

This numerous and popular community of professing Christians retain and cherish the spirit and friendship of the world in their midst; and perhaps there is no money-making employment—no form of worldly business that is not successfully carried on under the watch-care of this great community, called the visible Church. Whether the lusts of the flesh, or the pride of life be the objects promoted and secured by the business professor; he finds the Church a favorable and honorable place to pursue his calling, and hence his character, his occupation and influence, are connected with the Church, and make up a part of what is considered devoted to God and separate from the world.

It is doubtless well pleasing to the enemy of all righteousness, and favorable to the interests of his kingdom, that many of his subjects put on the form of godliness and assume the character and privileges that belong to the children of God. In no other way is it possible for the prince of this world to exercise his wisdom and power with so much effect, as in having a place and an influence in the midst of those who are called and chosen out of the world. Wherever they meet to worship, he meets with them. When they bring their gifts to the altar, he brings his offerings also; and the sacrifices of the righteous and the wicked are both together laid upon the same altar. Whatever is done for the salvation of sinners, he will have a part in the matter, and the place he occupies gives him a measure of authority in appointing the means and directing the agencies

that shall be employed in the work. He is rich in this world's goods, and cunning to deceive, and his children are wiser in their generation than the children of light. Hence the god of this world has his seat and great authority, and the kingdom of righteousness is, as it were, buried and concealed under the rubbish of forms and ceremonies that have not the life and spirit of Christ in them.

If the servants of the great King were wise—if they understood these things, and were separate from the world, having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, they would be received and acknowledged of God as his own peculiar people, and the world would know they were the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. The Lord will bless and exalt his people when they will seek and serve none beside him; and when they no more employ or trust in carnal weapons, he will give strength and wisdom from above, and they shall know that greater is he that is for them, than all that can be against them.

It is the deceiver and not the spirit of truth that makes us believe we cannot be a holy and powerful people—separate from the world—united in love, and one with Christ. It is no other than the deceiver that makes us believe the aid and friendship of the servants of mammon, or friends of the world, are necessary or profitable in advancing the cause of truth. True, indeed, having these influences on our side, the visible Church, according to the judgment of men, may glory in her wisdom and power,

and reckon herself most exalted and beloved of God; but according to the decisions of truth and the examples recorded in the Book of Inspiration, the children of God are more wise and powerful when the wisdom and influence of the world are arrayed against them, than when they are engaged in their favor, and in fellowship with them.

In these days, the world are willing to do more than to respect and honor the profession and doctrines of the Christian Church; they are willing to contribute much to increase her influence and popularity. The cunning serpent is well pleased to have churches established—buildings for the public worship erected, and the gospel regularly preached, if he may have a voice in the matter, and a measure of influence in directing how it shall be done. He would have every village adorned with costly and splendid buildings for religious worship, and would have the pride and grandeur of the world connected with them and displayed therein. He would make the house of God an agreeable and fashionable place for the giddy multitude to congregate on the Sabbath day, and there he would have them listen to the learned scholar and eloquent orator, and be interested and pleased with the services of the sanctuary.

The enemy knows well that his united strength is weakness when opposed against two or three faithful servants of the great King; therefore he does not contend openly and apparently, but under the mask of friendship, comes in where two or three

are met together, and being agreed with them in many things, gains a measure of their confidence and sympathy. He acknowledges the truths they believe, and professes his attachment to the cause of Christ. He learns the language of Christian experience and Christian fellowship, and through this language communicates a measure of his own spirit of darkness and unbelief. Herein the enemy gets an advantage, and we know not how much we lose in being ignorant of this device. Our prayers are hindered—our faith and zeal are paralized, and deadness and formality are manifest when Christians meet to worship. There is no concord between Christ and belial—no communion between light and darkness. How then can the spirit of Christ and the spirit of the world worship together. How can the servants of two masters of opposite characters be agreed and help each other by their mutual faith. Union is strength, when all the units or parts of which the whole is composed, are adapted to produce the same effect; but if the influence of one member or unit be opposed to the anticipated result, the strength of the whole is diminished.

The Lord our God is a jealous God; he requires the sincere affection and unreserved confidence of them that profess to love and worship him. The Psalmist said, "if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Our prayer must be the sincere desire of the heart, offered in humility and faith for such things as we are taught of God to pray for, otherwise we receive not, because we ask

amiss. The united petition of many should be as the prayer of *one*—the sincere expression of mutual faith, mutual hope and mutual love, otherwise it is confusion in the sight of Him who looketh on the heart. It is a compound of different elements not in harmony with itself, being composed of principles and motives diverse from each other, and as such cannot be accepted of God as the fervent, effectual prayer of the righteous. When members are joined together in one petition, they must be agreed—be of one mind and spirit, striving together with one desire for the same things. If the Psalmist could not be heard if he regarded iniquity in his heart, how can the united prayer of many be accepted, if iniquity be regarded among them.

The children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before them and were accursed, because one of their number coveted a goodly Babylonish garment and a wedge of gold. And the Lord said, "Israel hath sinned, neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel. Thou canst not stand before thine enemies until ye take away the accursed thing from among you." Josh. 7 : 12, 13. In this instance only one of their number had transgressed the covenant of the Lord, and when Achan was discovered and separated from them and destroyed, "the Lord said to Joshua, fear not, neither be thou dismayed."

THE SANCTUARY INACCESSIBLE TO THE UNHOLY.

It is written of king Uzziah, that he did right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father, Amaziah did, and as long as he sought the Lord, he prospered. "But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his own destruction, for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense. And four score priests of the Lord went after him and withstood Uzziah the king, and said, it appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests, the sons of Aaron; go out of the sanctuary for thou hast transgressed. Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense, and the leprosy even rose up in his forehead beside the incense altar. And they thrust him out from thence, yea himself hasted to go out because the Lord had smitten him."

Uzziah's presumptuous and great wickedness consisted in this; he went into the sanctuary, into the holy place to offer incense, when he was himself unsanctified and unholy. He was not consecrated to God nor devoted to his service, therefore it appertained not unto him to burn incense unto the Lord. The temple of God was holy and separate from every thing common or unclean, therefore the admission or the intrusion of any thing not cleansed or devoted to God, was a gross violation of the sanctity of that holy place. The Psalmist said, "holiness becometh thy house forever."

The Lord is the same to-day as in the beginning.

He changes not. His sanctuary is not less holy now than in the days of Uzziah. His temple, the altar of incense, and the mercy seat, where his presence and glory are manifest, is not a common or profane place. It is no more open to strangers, no more accessible to the unsanctified and unclean than in the days when Nadab and Abihu were consumed by the fire of the Lord, because they presumptuously offered their sacrifices upon the holy altar. To-day, as yesterday, and as in ages past, whoever would offer the incense of prayer and praise, and approach the mercy-seat, and draw near the presence of Him who cannot behold iniquity, must be cleansed and sanctified by the blood of Christ. Unbelief or filthiness of the flesh and spirit, cannot come near the divine presence, nor offer the holy incense of devotion in heavenly places in Christ. None but the faithful, the humble and contrite in heart, can meet together and find Jesus in their midst. Christ our forerunner, hath, for us, entered within the vail, and those only who abide in him, and he in them, can follow him there. While we remain in sin and unbelief, a cloud and thick darkness guards the holy place, and we cannot by any means find the way nor gain access to the mercy-seat.

When the children of God go up to appear before him in his temple, and to worship in his presence, they must leave the world behind. They cannot carry with them the sacrifices of unrighteousness, nor invite or permit the lovers of pleasure or the friends of the world to join and mingle in their devotions,

when they meet together in heavenly places in Christ. The apostle says, "the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are, and if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord, and how free from guile—how far from iniquity, and how pure in heart must they be, who sit together in heavenly places where Jesus manifests himself as he does not to the world. The disciples of Christ are called and chosen out of the world that they may be separate from it, and being separate, may be joined to the Lord in one spirit and have fellowship with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. Blessed and glorious privilege, the inspiration of our prayer—the consummation of our hope. We see this consummation in the future, we apprehend it in the present, and by faith we bring it near—very near. Come, Lord Jesus, and come quickly. We can do no more, only to watch and wait thy coming.

CHAPTER XXX.

Glory of the Jewish Temple—Its Laws and Ceremonies passed away—The Apostle describes the Spiritual Building or Temple—The precious Vessels, and all parts of the Jewish Temple, Shadows of Better Things to come—Its Types and Sacrifices—The Heavenly Things signified by these—No more occasion for these Types or Patterns since the Heavenly Things have taken their Place—The New Covenant embracing only the Children of God by Faith in Christ—The Holy Ointment—Things signified thereby—The Stones fitted for the Jewish Temple, and the Living Stones prepared for the Heavenly Building—The Children of God by Faith in Christ the Seed of Abraham, and Heirs of the Promises.

THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM A VISIBLE EXPRESSION OF THE BUILDING OF GOD MADE WITHOUT HANDS.

The Temple of Jerusalem was justly considered the most important and most sacred building in the world. It contained the sanctuary wherein were the ark of the covenant and the golden pot of manna,

and Aaron's rod that budded, and the holy vessels and instruments that were made according to the pattern showed to Moses in the mount, and designed to be employed only in the service and worship of the living and true God. This holy and consecrated building was intended to be the residence or dwelling-place of the King of Israel, where he promised to manifest his presence, and hear and answer the prayers, and receive the offerings, and accept the worship of his chosen people. Unto this holy and heavenly place, made with hands, the children of God were required to bring their sacrifices. and here they were commanded to make an atonement for their souls.

There were many laws and ceremonies to be observed in relation to the worship of God in his holy Temple. Nothing polluted or unclean might by any means come within the heavenly and consecrated place. Every one must bring an offering, and blood must be poured out and sprinkled upon the altar, before the mercy-seat, and upon the individual who would obtain help of God, whereby an atonement was made for their souls; otherwise they were not accounted righteous, and God did not accept their worship, nor bless and acknowledge them as his people. They must be obedient and do the things they were commanded, else they could not have access to God in his temple, nor enjoy the peculiar privileges and blessings that distinguished and separated the children of Israel from every other nation and people.

The first Temple made with hands and of earthly materials has passed away, and another made without hands, and of heavenly materials, a spiritual building, has risen up in its place. The Lord himself is the maker and builder of his own Temple, and where it hath pleased him, he has prepared for himself a dwelling wherein he will manifest his presence and glory and abide forever.

"The apostle Paul, unto the Church at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours," writes, "For we are laborers together with God. Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." "Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you" "If any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are."

In the second Epistle to the Church at Corinth, and to all the saints which are in all Achaia, it is written: "And what agreement hath the Temple of God with idols, for ye are the Temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people." The same apostle also, in the Epistle to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, speaks on this wise: "Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being

the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy Temple in the Lord. In whom also ye are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit."

The apostle Peter in his Epistle to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, &c., addressing them as elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Christ—after his benediction, and various exhortations descriptive of their character and privileges, writes on this subject: "Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." "Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious, and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." "Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is become the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling and rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God. Which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

Jesus Christ appeared in the world, and then was

laid in Sion the chief corner-stone, the foundation whereon this heavenly building stands, and in whom it groweth unto a holy Temple in the Lord. In whom also the Church at Corinth, and the saints at Ephesus and Achaia, and the strangers scattered throughout Pontus and Asia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus, in every place and every age, buil ed togeth-er for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

The Temple of Jerusalem, and all the precious things appertaining to the service of the sanctuary, were patterns of other and better things. They were shadows indicating and pointing to the substance; and of these, the apostle says he taketh away the first that he may establish the second. These were done away in Christ, in whom we have all that was signified or shadowed forth in the first Temple. We no more look after the shadows, because we have the substance; we need the patterns of heavenly things no more, since the heavenly things themselves are in our possession.

The Temple itself. the altar of sacrifice, the veil separating the holy from the most holy place, the ark of the covenant, the annointing oil, the mercy seat, and the cherubim overshadowing them—all these symbols have been demolished, and for eighteen hundred years no place has been found for them. These former things have passed away, and these types and shadows of good things to come are lost in the substance of the things signified.

All the vessels of the sanctuary, and every thing

pertaining to the former Temple, were purged with blood. Thousands of thousands of beasts were sacrificed, and their blood poured out and sprinkled upon the altar before the mercy seat, and upon the priests and the dedicated things that were employed in the worship and service of the sanctuary. It was necessary that the patterns of heavenly things be consecrated with blood, and the blood of bulls, and goats, and lambs, which were themselves the types of the Lamb of God and the blood of Christ, were sufficient for, and appointed of God for this purpose. But the heavenly things themselves, the lively stones or living members composing this spiritual building that groweth up into a holier Temple in the Lord, these must be cleansed and sanctified with better sacrifices than those; for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins; but Christ being come, a high priest of good things to come, by a more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, hath shed his own blood for the remission of sin, and now lives forever in the presence of God to intercede for us. The blood of this last and perfect sacrifice, is alone sufficient to purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

The heavenly things sanctified by the blood of Christ, and purged from dead works, are not the sanctuary, nor the vessels of the ministry; but they are those of whom it was written, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me," and "I will put my laws in their heart, and in their mind will I write them, and their sins and iniquities will I re-

member no more." These are vessels of mercy—instruments of righteousness, that compose and adorn the spiritual building, the Temple not made with hands, and which now is and shall be forever more, the habitation and dwelling-place of the King of Israel. As it is written, "the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

We have no more occasion for the brazen altar whereon to consume the victim, nor for a place to sprinkle the blood before the mercy-seat, because we now have redemption in the blood of Christ, which perfects forever them that are sanctified. We no more offer the blood of bulls and goats, which cannot take away sin, because the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, is sacrificed for us. "We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." We have a high Priest over the house of God, and may draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

We no more have the golden pot of manna, but we have the living bread that came down from heaven, and that giveth life unto the world. We no more have the ark of the covenant containing the tables of stone whereon were written by the finger of God his holy laws and commandments. But we

have the better covenant, established on better promises; not written upon tables of stone, but on fleshly tables of the heart. "And this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their heart, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least unto the greatest."

No man can teach his neighbor or brother, and make them know the things of God. No other than the spirit of truth, can write his laws in their hearts, or give them to discern spiritual things. The children of God by faith in Christ are those alone with whom this new covenant is made, and to whom these better promises truly belong. All these are taught of God, not of men; and all these, "from the least of them unto the greatest of them," have been with Jesus, and learned of him. Jesus said, "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God; every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." None beside those who have been taught of God, and not taught by the wisdom of men, can have any part or lot in this matter. They are not of the household of faith, are not in union with those who are being builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

Also the Lord showed Moses the pattern or shadow of better things to come, in the holy anointing

which was indeed very precious, and regarded as most holy. The ointment and sweet incense that Moses was commanded and instructed to make, was to be used in consecrating the tabernacle, and consecrating the priests, and the most holy things. They were forbidden to make or to use this compound for any other purpose, than in the consecration of such things as were holiness to the Lord. "Whoever compounded any like it, or put any of it upon a stranger, should even be cut off from his people." Whatever was anointed was separated from every common or profane use, and considered in a peculiar manner, as belonging to God and devoted to his service.

This shadow or sign of heavenly things has also vanished away, and instead thereof we have the substance in those heavenly things of which the beloved disciple spake when he said, "but ye have an unction from the holy One, and ye know all things. But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." The heavenly teaching signified by this holy ointment, is indeed most precious, and implies the fulfillment of these blessed words: "If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." As the blood of Jesus is more important and availing in its application to the heart and conscience than the

blood of slain beasts, even so the unction from the holy One is more precious and effectual in its influence upon those that are enlightened and sanctified thereby. "They that have heard and learned of the Father, need not that any man teach them. His laws are written in their heart, and put in their mind, and they love his commandments, and they are not grievous."

The Jewish Temple was built of hewn stone, and at great expense of time and labor; these stones were cut out of the mountain and fitted for their place in the building, before they were collected together. All the furniture and different parts of this vast, magnificent palace of the King of kings, were finished and made perfect, before they were brought to their place, so that when the Temple was raised up, and the building completed, the sound of a hammer was not heard.

The stones of which the second Temple is built, are not collected from the mountains of Judea, but gathered from every nation, and tongue, and people. They are not dead minerals that must be fitted with the hammer and chisel, but living stones, renewed in knowledge and true holiness. They are not dug out of the earth, but chosen out of the world; and even now in the hand of the great Master Builder and Lord of the Temple, they are being fashioned and made ready to fill their place in the spiritual building not made with hands. Even now the stones, and pillars, and vessels, of the house of God are being "sought out," and being prepared and

made ready to be "raised up;" and who can tell how soon the King of Israel and the King of Saints, will come and take possession of his Temple, and in his glory appear in his holy habitation, and abide in his dwelling place forever more.

The Jewish Temple belonged exclusively to the literal posterity of Abraham, but the faithful in Christ Jesus, are reckoned the seed of faithful Abraham, and all these, both Jews and Gentiles, inherit the fullness of the promises made to the Fathers. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." The promises of the Old and New Testaments are signs or evidences of things that exist in Christ. With respect to time, they are not fulfilled or apprehended in the present or in the future, but are apprehended and fulfilled in Christ, "in whom are all things, and by whom all things consist." The kingdom of God is not far off, "beyond the bounds of time and space;" and with respect to its appearance and character, there is nothing strange or amazing therein. The simple child and the way-faring man abiding in Christ, may apprehend and enter the glories of the kingdom, with perhaps no other emotions than love and joy. Our Lord said: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, for behold the kingdom of God is within you."

The good that is done in the earth, the Lord doeth it. He is the beginning and the ending of every

good work—the author and finisher of all things that are right and perfect. The words of men pass away, and their works perish with the using, but the word of the Lord endureth forever, and his purposes and doings are established according to his pleasure. Time is one of his active agents, and wicked men, and good men, and all creatures, and all created things, are among the instruments he employs, and the means by which his glory and truth are revealed and made manifest to his creatures.

The work of the sanctuary, or the building of God was not of human origin, though human instruments were employed in its construction. The first idea or conception of a Temple where God would meet his worshippers, came from the *Infinite Mind.* "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel that they bring me an offering; of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye shall take my offering. And let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." The Lord of heaven and earth conceived the plan, and shewed the pattern, and gave laws and particular directions concerning every part of his Temple. Blessed and glorious building; worthy the honor and admiration of angels and men, because the Maker and Builder is God. Here is the beginning, or first audible and visible expression of the beginning of the Temple of God. The ending thereof, is the "house

not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The Beginning and the Ending, the Author and the Finisher, is the same Lord over all, blessed forever more. His word endures forever; his purposes are never frustrated, and all his doings are established. The powers of darkness and wicked men, combined, are not able to destroy the work of God. The beginning, the progress, and the perfection of his Temple, has been, and now is, and ever shall be a living and glorious monument of his handy-work. It shall remain and appear as it is, "the Lord's doing;" and though marvellous in our eyes, we shall behold it, and worship therein, world without end.

The agents and instruments employed have changed again and again, but the work has not ceased, neither will the divine Architect abandon his purpose, or forsake his dwelling-place in the humble, contrite heart. There indeed, the daily sacrifice is taken away, and wicked hands have demolished the holy places made with hands, and the Jewish high priest no more offers the blood of atonement for his own sins, and for the errors of the people; but these agencies were suffered to fail because the progress and perfection of the work required other, and better instruments than these.

Inasmuch as the blood of Jesus is better than the blood of slain beasts, and inasmuch as the substance itself is better than the pattern or shadow thereof; insomuch is the Christian Church, and the privileges and blessings of the present gospel dispensation, superior to the privileges and ceremonies of the

Jewish sanctuary. It was indeed most sublime and glorious to witness the manifestations of the divine presence, when the cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. But even these wonderful and glorious visitations were not so excellent and valuable as the fulfillment of the promise, "Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst." It must indeed have been comforting and most delightful, to look upon the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night, and know the presence and power of the God of Israel were there, and engaged for the defense and support of his people. But even this peculiar and exalted privilege, was not so desirable nor rich in mercy and blessing, as the delightful assurance, "If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

The substance of these promises far exceeds any thing given to God's ancient people; but since Christ came into the world, the blessings and glory comprehended in these, and other great and exceeding precious promises, belong to all them that bear the name and character of Christian. Our Lord said to his disciples: "Lo, I am with you always." "All that I have is thine." "The works that I do shall ye do also, and greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to the Father." "Where I am, there shall also my servant be." "If any man serve me, him will my Father honor." True, indeed, the privileges and glory of the former dispensation, are

lost in the superior and more spiritual blessings that came with Christ into the world.

While the first tabernacle was yet standing, the children of God were required to bring their offerings there, and were not permitted to present their sacrifices, or make an atonement for their souls in any other place than that which the Lord had chosen. This place was holy because the Lord promised to put his name there, and acknowledged that it should be his dwelling-place forever. According to the divine appointment the divine presence always resided between the cherubim, over the mercy-seat, within the veil. Here was the chosen and acknowledged residence of the King of Israel and the King of Saints; and here the Lord of Glory accepted their worship, and manifested himself to his people. Truly, this place might well be called most holy, and the city wherein the temple was built, the city of the great King—the holy city; and the people who were called and chosen to worship there, the holy and peculiar people.

Since Christ came into the world, and God was manifest in the flesh, he has no more manifested himself in the Temple made with hands. Since the blood of Jesus was poured out, and the last great and perfect sacrifice offered for the sin of the world, the blood of slain beasts has no more been sprinkled before the mercy-seat to make an atonement for sin. When the Lamb of God expired on the cross, and said, "it is finished," "the veil of the temple was rent in twain," "signifying we now have boldness

to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say his flesh."

The residence of the King of Israel is no more located within the inner sanctuary, "but the tabernacle of God is with men," and the habitation of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are found in the humble, contrite heart; even as our Lord said to his disciples, "if a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." The former tabernacle where the ark rested, and where the glory of the God of Israel was manifested, has passed away, and another, more perfect tabernacle, made without hands, is now being raised up to stand forever on its ruins. The same Lord whose divine presence abode in the temple, and sanctified that holy place, was the same who said, "The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." "But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him."

Those whom the Father seeketh to worship him are not called to go to Jerusalem; they need not look toward the sanctuary, nor sprinkle the blood of atonement upon the altar; but in all places of his dominion, and at all times, they may come boldly to a throne of grace, and draw near with full assurance of faith, because He who once dwelt between the cherubim now abides in their heart. Their bodies

are his Temple, and their souls the habitation of his Spirit; and hence they cannot go to another place to find Him who is with them always. Since the Lamb of God was slain, the vail is taken away, and the true worshippers are made nigh by the blood of Christ. They stand always before the mercy-seat, in the holy place, and here Christ is revealed in them, and manifested to them, as he is not to the world. They that believe in Jesus and are washed and sanctified by his blood, are brought nearer the divine presence than even the high priest could be, when he went once a year into the holy of holies.

And now draw near, all ye that love the Lord, and from henceforth let us declare what he hath done for our souls. He hath chosen us out of the world, that we might be a holy and peculiar people. He hath redeemed us from all our iniquities, and made our hearts his Temple, that we might glorify him in our bodies and spirits which are his. He hath given us many exceeding precious promises, whereby we are made partakers of the divine nature, being baptized into one spirit in Christ. He hath written his laws in our heart, and put them in our mind, and we keep them, and we know we are of God, because we love his commandments, and they are not grievous.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The resistance and aversion of the Creature prevents the reception of Spiritual Blessings—No delay or inability on the part of the Creator to give whatever is Good—The wants and necessities of our Being draw us to Pray—The Love of God revealed in his Dispensations toward his Creatures—Effects of Prayer—Salvation the result of holding fast the things freely given us of God.

PRAYER THE MEDIUM THROUGH WHICH WE RECEIVE THE THINGS OF GOD.

The blessings of grace and salvation prepared for the children of God, are given in answer to prayer. They are not received before we apprehend or expect them, nor do they come upon us before we desire them. The good things prepared for them that love God are bestowed upon them, when by strong and fervent desire they are made able and willing to receive them. The full soul loathes even the honeycomb, and it is vain to offer even dainty meat to

them that have no desire or want of food. Hunger and thirst prepare the body for the reception and enjoyment of meat and drink; and without these preparatives, the physical system could not relish or endure the things that sustain life and health. Spiritual health and life also, are sustained by spiritual nourishment, and the soul likewise must feel its necessities before they can be supplied. The mind must apprehend and desire to know the truth, before it can believe and obey it. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled. They shall receive the blessings they apprehend and fervently desire, in the order and measure they apprehend and desire them. Inquiry and prayer are necessary in order to receive; they go before and prepare the way for the reception of spiritual blessings. The perception of good, with a sense of want and desire to attain it, are both the evidence and the beginning of the possession of the things desired. There is no delay on the part of the Creator to bestow instantly and abundantly whatever will be good for his creatures, and the good that is prepared and promised to them, would be presently received and enjoyed, if human beings did not feel and cherish an aversion to the things of God.

The remission of sin, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, are blessings prepared for all, and freely given to them that will accept them; but though these good things are near at hand and ready for our reception, we may live long before we begin to

apprehend or desire them, and we may apprehend and desire them long before we believe and receive them. Life and immortality were brought to light when Christ came into the world, and how few there are even now that fully apprehend and receive the "fullness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ." They are present with us, but we do not perceive them; we hear, but do not understand the things that are prepared for them that will come and take them. Therefore we remain in obscurity and are such as have need of milk, when for the time we ought to be teachers and strong men in Christ. We grow in grace while spiritual health can be sustained by the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; and when age and experience require strong meat, we fall away and do not go on to perfection. We are not like the apostle, continually pressing after and attaining the things that are before; and for this cause our faith is weak, and many that were once enlightened have fallen away, where it is perhaps impossible to renew them again to repentance.

The wants and unsatisfied desires that live within us, are strong and tender expressions of the love and care of the Creator. Without these we should never learn nor apprehend any thing better than our present state. These inward teachers instruct and draw us to seek after something we have not; and these desires would quickly lead us to the fountain from whence every want is supplied, if our resistance and aversion to that which is good, were not stronger

than our necessities. We must suffer much, and grace and truth must overcome much opposition before any creature will begin to pray. The reason we are not sanctified and saved through the truth, is not because the truth is far off, but because of our deep aversion and continual resistance; and the reason we do not attain the highest results of Christian experience, and apprehend and enjoy the fullness of the great and precious promises, is not because they are far off, but because we love "to draw back" more than we love "to go up higher." As soon and as far as we apprehend and press after the things prepared for them that love God, we receive them. The promises are yea and amen, not in the future, but in Christ; and the voice of the Spirit is always, "Come, for all things are now ready." As soon and as far as we cease to resist, and leave ourselves to God, He takes possession of his own, and works in us to apprehend and receive the beginning and the fullness of every promise and command revealed in his word. We need not go to another place, nor do any thing before we obey God, but we may submit ourselves to him and then do whatever the spirit of truth requires. All animate and inanimate things exist and move in obedience to God, only so far as moral beings love and choose to live without God in the world. He is ever present, and we should apprehend and know him, if we did not meet with resistance the communications which he makes of himself to us.

The love of God is revealed in the general arrangements of his providence, and in the special relations and circumstances of every creature. It is the wisdom and love of God that brings them into being, and that sustains their existence in the peculiar circumstances in which they live. It is the love of God that saves them from the afflictions they do not suffer, and it is the same love that permits the wants and miseries they endure. Whatever will help any creature in working out his salvation is done for him, and no one is prevented from securing his only and greatest good by any thing that God has done, or any thing that man can do. The dispensations of providence are not adapted to destroy, but to save. There are indeed many that are deprived of the comforts of life, and many are even destitute of the knowledge of good. Many heathen are without the Bible and have never heard of holiness or heaven; but none of these are without God in the world, unless they have grieved his spirit until it has ceased to strive with them. Many professing Christians are without Christ, because they will not have this man to reign over them.

The infinitely wise and perfect Lawgiver and Judge of human beings, does not permit his own dispensations nor the doings of wicked men to interrupt or prevent the exercise of his love and power toward any of his creatures. He knows what is in man, and he knows the measure of light and what manner of circumstances are best adapted to draw him

to work out his salvation; and whatever he knows is good for his creatures, he can never want power or love to accomplish. The same mighty and ever-present Being who determines the bounds of our habitations and appoints the conditions of our probation, is the same that works in, and with our circumstances to enlighten and draw us to himself. The things that are good for the creature, are not those things that are far from him, but that which is given and that which is done, is that which is for the best. It is not neccessary that the laws—the government, or the disposition of our heavenly Father toward us be changed in any wise, but only necessary that we acknowledge and approve with our whole heart, whatever he has done, and whatever he will do. We should love him because he first loved us, and then we shall see and feel nothing but the manifestations of his love in all that he does or permits to be done to us. The Lord is good, and they that believe this truth, know he hath done all things well.

Blessed are they who are reconciled to their Maker, and are in harmony with the dispensations of his providence. They live in peace, and their prayers are not hindered, because they pray according to the will of God. Our prayers do not change the will or government of our heavenly Father, but fervent prayer works in us powerfully to change our will, and powerfully draws us to be reconciled to God. The spirit of prayer is the spirit of truth

working in us, to will, and to do what God wills and does. How precious the exercise of prayer, and how profitable the result, if prayer prevail and constrain us to hold fast the things we are taught to pray for. This is salvation and eternal life, to love and hold fast the things that are freely given us of God.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Fulfillment of His Word hid from Observation —The Disciples walked with Jesus after his Resurrection, and did not know Him—All Events fulfill the Word of God—The Wisdom of Men cannot discern the connection between the Word, and the Events fulfilling It—When Prophecies are fulfilled the World know not what is being done—No Power can interrupt the exercise of the Power of God—Daniel, the Hebrew Children, and the Prophet Ezra, believed that Power belongeth unto God—The Lord doeth whatsoever he will with His Creatures.

POWER BELONGETH UNTO GOD.

The Psalmist said: "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God." The Apostle, also, "For the Word of God is powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

"The Lord is indeed wonderful in counsel and mighty in working," and none can understand the depth of his wisdom or the greatness of his power. The wonderful works of God and his mighty acts, and the fulfillment of his Word, are, as it were, hid from observation. They are performed within us, and their appearances and effects are visible round about us, but we are too blind to perceive them. The light shines but darkness does not comprehend it.

The disciples walked along the road to Emmaus, talking with Jesus, and they were personally and familiarly acquainted with him, but they knew him not, because their eyes were holden that they should not know him. They were acquainted with the writings of Moses and the Prophets, and the things whereof they wrote were then passing before them, but they understood not. The prophecies and promises they were looking and waiting for, were then being fulfilled in the very things which they told Jesus had just come to pass in Jerusalem. But the disciples did not perceive in these passing events, the fulfillment of the Word of God, which plainly revealed and declared these things. They saw and heard in the news of the day, the things our Lord had told them before, should come to pass; but when they saw and heard, they did not discern the application of his words. Their personal experience, also, was an internal witness that these things were of God, and their hearts burned within them when they talked with Jesus by the way, and yet they

knew not that it was Jesus; nor did they perceive the accomplishment of the wonderful works of God in the events that were then passing before them.

The changes and events of life, great and small, are only the effects of the fulfillment of the Word of God, and, indeed, all things that transpire within and round about us, can but fulfill His Word. Prophecies are all the time being filled up; promises are all the time being verified, and the Word and Power of God are all the time being revealed and made manifest in the world, even as they were in those days when the Son of God walked and talked with men clothed with a body like ours. But as it was in those days, even so it is now, the world do not perceive the connection between the events of the day and the words of inspiration which are fulfilled in them. And the disciples of Jesus are slow of heart to believe all the prophets and apostles have spoken, even though our blessed Lord is daily expounding to them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself.

The wisdom of men cannot discern the things of God, and when his word is fulfilled and we see and hear, we perceive not what is being done. We take the events of the day as something that accidentally comes to pass, or something that necessarily happens according to the course of things, and hence we see and feel nothing of the fulfillment of the Word of God in them. There is a mighty agency working every where that is "hid from observation," and hidden from us, because we do not live by every

word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The changes we experience, and that come within our knowledge, are true interpreters of the powerful Word of God, and are, as it were, visible expressions of its fulfillment. They constantly declare and make manifest the wisdom of Him with whom we have to do.

For many centuries the Christian world have held in their possession a revelation of eternal truths; and herein the prophecies and promises of the Old and New Testaments are recorded, and doubtless most of all these have been openly fulfilled among the people of God. But how few, at any time, have been able to say, "this day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears;" or been able to say, we know these things now passing before us, are the events spoken of in this or that word of revelation. Wisdom and power belongeth unto God, who can do all things according to His Word, without the knowledge or consent of his creatures. Whether men will believe and obey the truth, or whether they will believe a lie and follow the imaginations of their own heart, His word is fulfilled in them and by them. All things work together for good to them that love and walk in the truth, and all things work against them that love and walk in their own ways. The power of wicked men and devils cannot derange the government of the Creator. He executes his laws, fulfills his Word, protects the innocent, punishes the guilty, and blesses and saves them that fear and trust in him, as if no enemy and no rebellion existed

in his dominions. With a word, he can paralize the strength of the mighty, and with less than a word he can turn the wisest counsel of the wicked against themselves. If it were his good pleasure, he could scatter the devices of the wicked in a moment, or could abase the proud before they exalted themselves; but he permits them to go thus far, that he may learn them that trust in him, there is no power but of God. He could dispel the powers of darkness, but he permits them to come near, that we may know that nothing can harm us if we be followers of that which is good. He could give riches and pleasures to them that love him, but he suffers the unjust and the covetous to take their goods, and gives labor and poverty to his own servants, that they may know their safety and peace are in him, not in the things of the world. This power belongeth unto God, and happy indeed are they who live by his Word and learn in their experience the riches of his wisdom and glory of his power. They are free and secure in their estate, without the trouble of defending themselves. They enjoy the substance of all riches without the care or burden of earthly goods.

The comfort and support of human beings come from God, and nothing can turn away his blessings from those whom he will bless. No circumstance can suspend the application of his benefits a moment beyond his own appointed time. Our God is the God of circumstances, and the effects of circumstances are his own handy work. They are, as it were, his faithful and ready servants that wait to

do his will, or his passive instruments, that can do no more nor less than he bids them do. O my soul, learn thou to trust in the Lord, for power belongeth unto Him.

Daniel believed that power belongeth unto God, and, therefore was not afraid to go into his chamber, and with his windows open, kneel upon his knees three times a day, and pray and give thanks to God. And when the royal decree must be executed, he was ready and willing to go either into the lion's den, or into the King's palace; and the power which he gave to God was exercised in his behalf and he rested that night in quiet security with the hungry lions around him. The three Hebrew children believed that power belongeth unto God, and therefore were not afraid to say to the King, "we are not careful to answer thee in this matter," "if it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king." The Prophet Ezra believed that power belongeth unto God, and therefore would not ask of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help them against the enemy in the way, because he had spoken to the king, saying, the hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him, but his power and wrath are against all them that forsake him. So they fasted and besought the Lord for this, and he was entreated of them. King Asa believed that power belongeth unto God, when he cried unto the Lord and said, "Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many or with them

that have no power; help us, O Lord, for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude." And as he believed, it was nothing with the Lord to help, whether with many or with few; so it was done to him, and a host of a thousand thousand fled before him and were destroyed.

Blessed are they who believe that power belongeth unto God, and believe also, that the powers that be, are ordained of God. They fear not the power of wicked men nor the powers of darkness, for they know these can have no power to injure except it be given them from above. They fear God and give glory to him, and the power and glory they give to him, is their glory and their defense. However straitened their circumstances, or fearful the dangers and miseries that threaten them, all these are powerless before them because greater is the power that is in them and for them than all that can be against them. "Blessed is the man that trusts in the Lord and whose help the Lord is." When wicked men and devils combine to cast him down, their casting down is the Lord's lifting up. When they make poor, the Lord makes rich. When they abase, the Lord exalts. They intend it for evil, the Lord intends it for good, and the counsel of the Lord stands, and he does all his pleasure. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name and give the power and dominion and glory to him.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Personal Reflections—Confidence in God—Earnest Waiting for the Manifestation of His Presence and Glory.

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

April, 1849.]

In these days my own sins, and the sins of the world, press heavily upon me. A bitter cup is given me to drink, and I know by whom it is prepared, and I must drink it. It is filled with darkness, suspense, fervent desire, hope, and faith. All these are mingled together, and the soul is just able to endure the intense conflict: "Help Lord, lest he tear my soul in pieces, and there be none to deliver."

I believe that power belongeth unto God, and believe his grace sufficient in every time of need, and this day I believe and trust in him with unwavering confidence. The grace and truth given me I still retain, and hold fast the same with stronger assu-

rance. O Lord, I have not fallen away from thy commandments, for I love them more and more; and the faith and love thou hast wrought in me I have kept, and have lost nothing. But now, and often, my soul is in adversity, and I groan to be delivered. I pray not for myself alone, but for the whole creation; even for every creature that waits with me for the manifestation of the sons of God. We wait to be restored again to that blessed estate forfeited by sin, and lost by the fall. The Word of God inspires my prayer, and strengthens my faith, to believe I shall not pray and wait in vain. "Every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth." It is given me to seek things out of sight, and to pray for things not yet made manifest; but the day will declare them, and the time draws near. My prayer is offered; my soul is, as it were, poured out, and I can do no more. In silent amazement I look within and around for help, and find none. I look to my teachers for truth, and find error more and more abundant. The bottomless pit seems to be open, and the smoke thereof to be filling the moral world with obscurity, confusion, and death. "Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, and the faithful fail from among the children of men."

All things are possible with God, and nothing is too hard for the Almighty. They that trust in him shall never fail, nor be confounded. I have trusted in him and am helped. I know nothing else, but to wait, trusting in the Lord. Faith in God has given me victory over many and great evils. Things

visible and temporal have no more dominion over me. The loss of earthly goods, or friendships, unjust censure or reproach, sickness, and the near prospect of death—all these are my profitable servants, and can do no more than work for my good; and inasmuch as I feel them, or apprehend them in the future, they afford me more comfort than sorrow. They are my heavenly Father's passive instruments; and because I love and trust in him, he only employs them to do me good. There is no terror in death; no gloom in the grave; and no want of anything but to be delivered from the bondage of corruption; and with the whole creation redeemed from the ruins of the fall, and restored to the glorious liberty of the children of God. This prospect is continually before me, and this hope is the strength of my heart. Therefore I will trust in the Lord though he slay me, and leave me to suffer all manner of evils; for there is no misery so extreme as that which I feel and fear when drawing back from this, my hope and faith in God. In thee, O Lord, I will trust, and be glad, because every refuge has failed me, and I am brought where there is no hope for me but in thee; and though I find myself more and more destitute of the things I desire, and more and more dark and void, yet in this also will I be confident, and trust in the Lord. Thou art giving me things that were far off, and the consolations of grace enjoyed in the past are taken away, that nothing may hinder me from pressing after the things that are to come. Thou hast given thine angels charge concerning me,

and I am kept and delivered from the evils that are not profitable to me. Thou hast given me to hope for myself, and for all that are thine, that we shall soon know and enjoy greater and better things than we have yet attained or even conceived. And thou dost work in me the fervent desire, and I believe the effectual prayer, that we shall quickly apprehend and attain these better things. There seems to be in me, and in all things around me, an earnest waiting, and an empty void; a void so vast and deep, a desire so intense and comprehensive, that nothing, save an open, unveiled manifestation of the divine presence and glory, can satisfy the waiting expectation, or fill the vacant space. I love the burden I bear and love the prayer I am taught to pray, and will not cease to remain crucified with Christ, until I with all the children of God know the power of his resurrection, and the blessings apprehended, be received in exchange for the prayer that obtains and receives them. COME LORD JESUS, AND COME QUICKLY.

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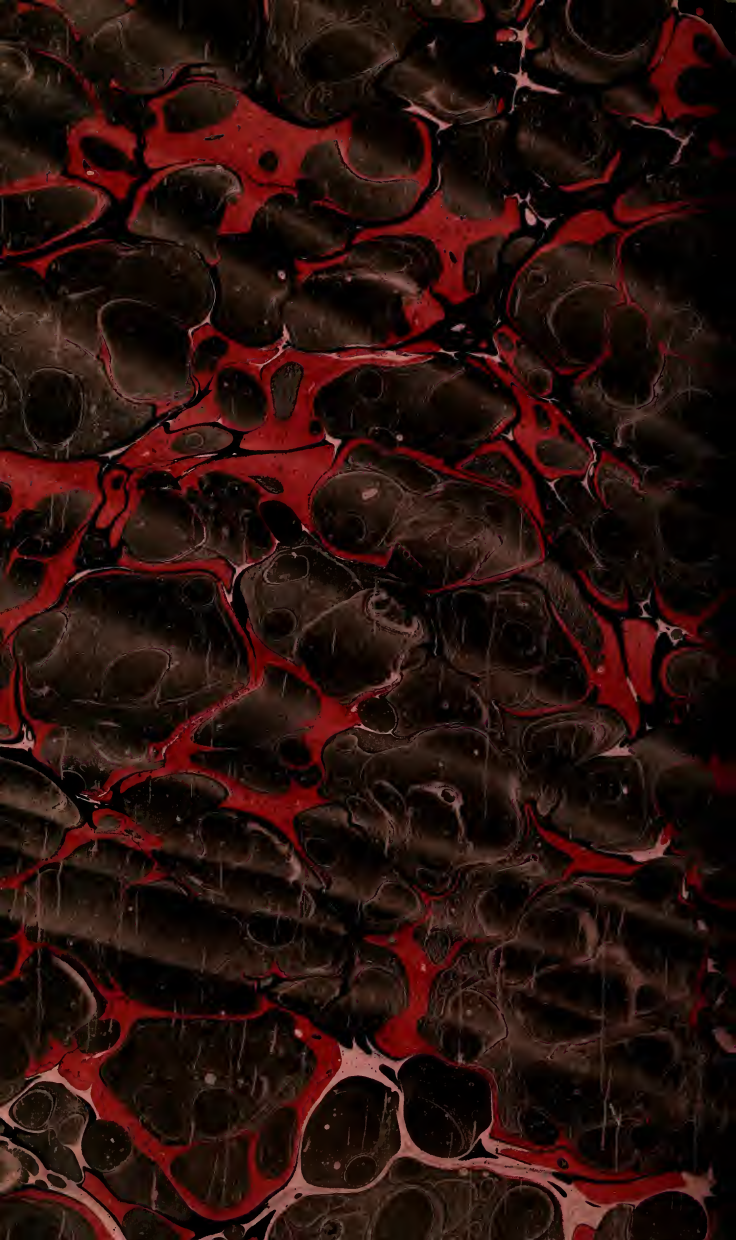

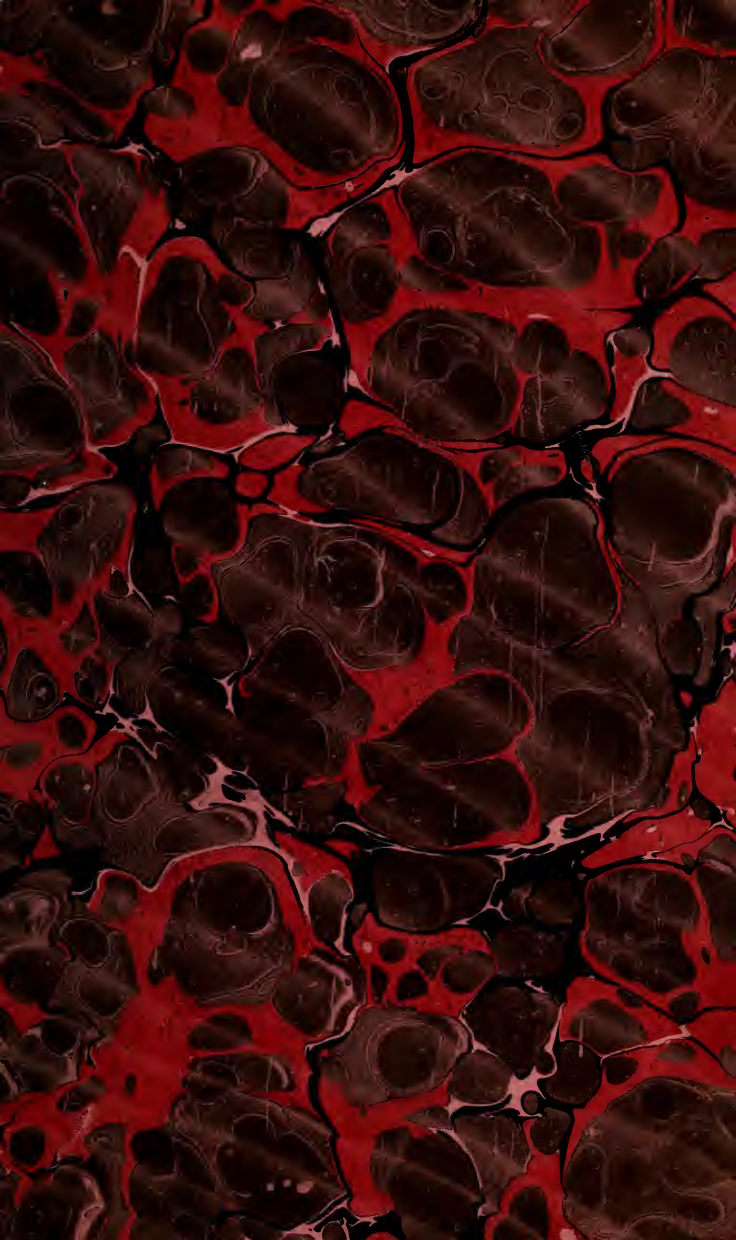

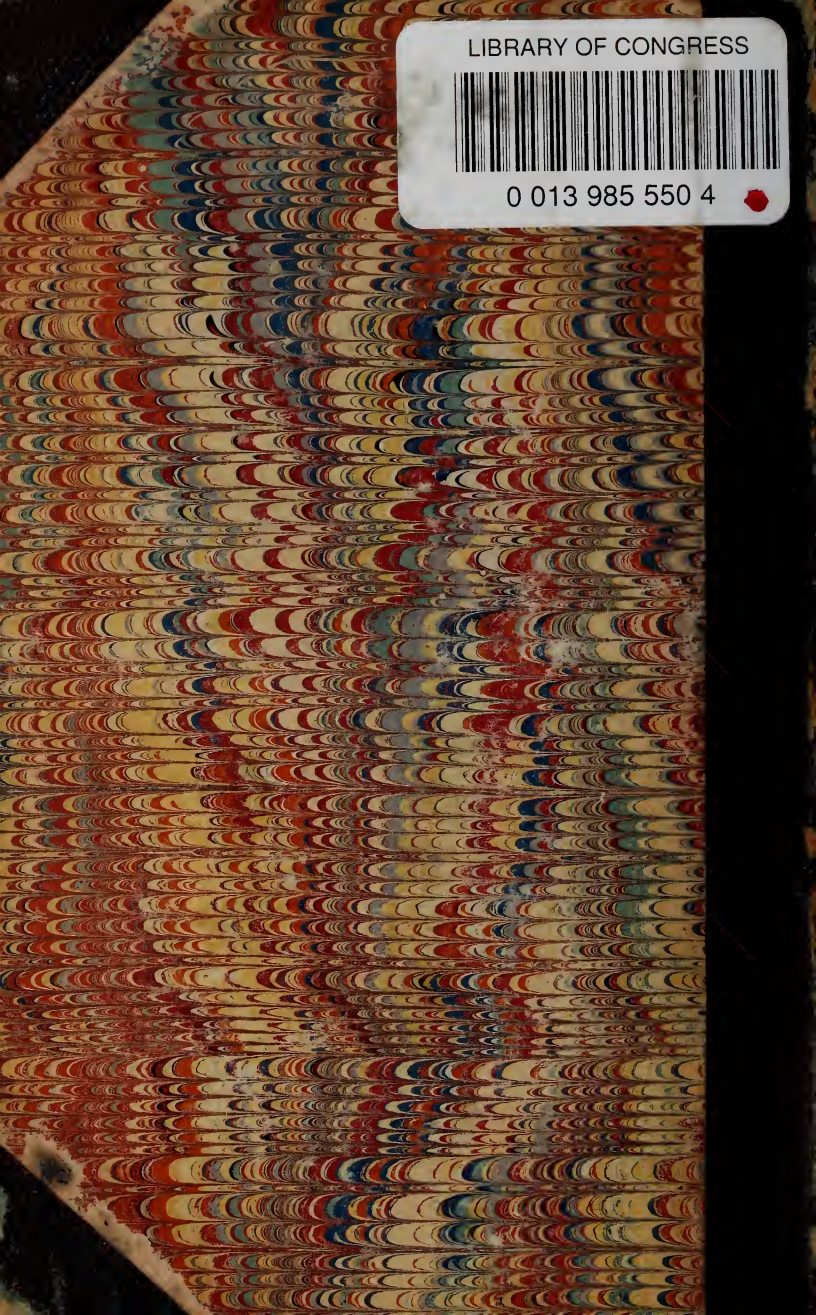
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